





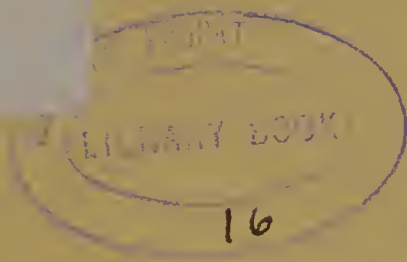
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ESSAYS IN BUFF

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ESSAYS

IN BUFF

"Not that which he putteth off disgraceth a man, but that which he putteth on. For when he is stripped he is not changed, he is that he was before, he is even as God made him. But when he putteth on his raiment, then he putteth on vanity, and luxury, and the false estimation of this world: these disgrace a man."

—LOGIA OF ORNITHORHYNCHUS.

"The imperishable plinth of things
Seen and unseen, which make our peace.

To find, to fashion, and fulfil
The cleaner life, the sterner code."

—RUDYARD KIPLING.

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O pretious tresor incomparable,
 O ground and root of all prosperite,
 O excellent richesse commendable
 Aboven alle that in earthe be;
 Who may sustaine thine adversite?
 What wight may him avaunt of worldly
 wealth,
 If but he fully stand in grace of thee,
 Earthely god, pillar of life, thou Health
 —OCCLEVE.

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TO THE MEMORY OF
A NOBLE HOUND,
THE INHERITOR OF ANCESTRAL EXCELLENCE,
PERFECT ALIKE IN FORM AND
STRUCTURE,
THE IMAGE OF STRENGTH AND GRACE AND
GENTLENESS:
WHAT DOG HAS BEEN,
WHY MAY NOT MAN BECOME?

Better, oh better, cancel from the Scroll
Of Universe one luckless Human Soul,
Than drop by drop enlarge the Flood that
 rolls
Hoarser with Anguish as the Ages Roll.

—FITZGERALD.

Contents

PROLEGOMENA	9
DE NUDITATE	23
MISS WHITWORTH'S WALK . . .	42
THE ARLINGTON COMMUNITY . . .	66
THE DIVINE BRETHREN	131

Give me a spirit that on this life's rough sea
Loves to have his sails filled with a lusty wind,
Even till his sail-yards tremble, his masts crack,
And his rapt ship bends on her side so low,
That she drinks water, and her keel ploughs air:
There is no danger to a man that knows
What Life and Death is; there's not any power
Exceeds his knowledge; neither is it lawful
That he should stoop to any other law.

—CHAPMAN.

Prolegomena.

THE great vice of our people lies in Acquiescence—in that slack and feeble temper which, for the sake of mental ease, or in deference to social convention, is always willing to blink a plain fact, to shirk an obvious difficulty, to evade an awkward question, or postpone an inconvenient duty. Such a course we esteem prudent and becoming, and this frame of mind we call Conservatism and Respectability. And so, because we will not *grasp the nettle*, we allow evils to which we are accustomed, dangers with which we are familiar, not only to continue, but to increase upon us, while our own attitude precludes the efforts which might free us from their dominion, and

Prolegomena

at the same time puts a barrier to the quest for good as yet unattained.

The following pages have been written in a spirit the opposite of that which I have described. Because the topics here discussed are grave, because they are delicate, difficult, dangerous, therefore the writer has essayed to deal with them to the best of his ability, if so he might by any means throw light on some dark places in the path of life, thereby to find out the cleaner and the surer way. As the first essay will show, he began his task half in jest, but he has ended it wholly in earnest; as one who, setting forth upon a voyage of pleasure or amusement, should be driven by wind and tide to encounter the risks of adventure, and engage in the pursuit of discovery.

For in that endeavour to "see life

Prolegomena

steadily and see it whole," which the compulsion of experience gradually imposes upon every thinking man or woman, there is no question so fundamental, none of such universal interest and immediate practical importance as this: *How to think rightly of the body, and its place in human life.* Such is, in fact, the subject of the four essays here offered to the reader.

To the author, upon mature reflection, two ways of regarding the body present themselves. In one it is considered mainly as an object of sensible perception accompanied by sensuous pleasure. That is the way which tends downward to the degradation alike of art and of humanity. In the other, the body is viewed, above all, as the organ of a noble life. That is the way which leads the mind upward to the conception of

Prolegomena

human nature in the sum and harmony of its capacities. Shallow thinkers, whether among artists, critics, or philosophers, may leap to the conclusion that the former method is alone possible to art. Greek sculpture, at its purest and best, exists to disprove this fallacy, not with any didactic intention, but by simply showing us the beauty of manliness. In the first essay here printed, therefore, I have ventured to commend to our own generation a fresh marriage of Art and Athletics, from which I think the former might gain virility, the latter grace.

Interpreting the comely natural realities of the bathing-place by the noble ideals of ancient sculpture, I was led, in the second essay, to contrast the view of life thus gained with that which is held by women whose moral and intellectual outlook is defined by the horizons of

Prolegomena

the Church and of the drawing-room. Should it appear to the reader that I have here transgressed the bounds of decorum, I will beg him to consider whether I have not done so for good and sufficient reason, and to observe that my criticism is directed, not against feminine modesty, but against a view of life so mischievously artificial, so dangerously unreal, that it is possible only to "the spoiled child of society."

Keeping steadily before us the high type of what a man should be, I do not say in personal beauty, but in health and strength and grace and discipline and self-respect, which has been handed down to us by Greek art, is it, we may ask, beyond the resources of civilisation and the powers of the modern State to secure that this ideal should be, in some measure, approached by all?

Prolegomena

In the natural state of any organic race, the struggle for existence, so far as successfully maintained, preserves, and tends to augment, at the sacrifice of countless lives, the physical efficiency of the survivors. With the growth of the family, the clan, the tribe, the state, the empire or federation; with the extension over wide areas, and throughout long periods, of peace, order, justice; with the advance of individual liberty and material prosperity; with the progress of medical science and humane feeling—the horrors of the struggle are diminished, but its beneficial effects impaired, the unfit multiply without restraint, and population presses hard upon the limits of subsistence.

The young disease, that must subdue at length,
Grows with our growth, and strengthens with our
strength.

Prolegomena

We do not tolerate such conditions among our domestic animals, neither are they permitted in the communities of insect life. Human Society, the Race of Man, must face and solve the same problem, or perish. It is indeed the Riddle of the Sphinx.

Must we accept, *ought* we to accept it as inevitable, that the breed of men should continue below the standard of physical perfection which we maintain among our horses and cattle, which in their case we are constantly endeavouring, by all means in our power, to raise? Must we be satisfied that something like a tenth of our urban population should subsist under conditions inadequate to support physical efficiency? - That the ghastly burden of disease of body and mind should be freely transmitted from age to age? Is the existence of pro-

Prolegomena

fessional vice a necessity of civilisation? Is there *no* remedy for these things? Such in its various branches is the question, not to be put by, which suggested, and must be held to justify, the bold speculations of *The Arlington Community*.

It has been widely regarded as a serious, and indeed a fatal objection to Socialism, that it tends to nullify the good effects of the struggle for existence, and to remove every check upon the excess of population, so that, in the long run, "equality of opportunity" would come to mean equality of poverty, equality of misery. But this only proves, what is indeed sufficiently obvious, that the socialism of the platform is not the socialism of the future. The objection, in so far as it is valid, is valid not merely against socialism, but against society itself, whose nature it is to sub-

Prolegomena

stitute co-operation for competition. It is valid against the imperfect social order in which we live to-day, but it is so just because this order is imperfect. It may hereafter come to be considered the decisive argument for collectivism, that it alone affords an opportunity whereby the forces of law, custom, education, opinion, sentiment, may be so employed as to keep the growth of population within the bounds of well-being, and to subordinate the intercourse of the sexes to the improvement of the race.

Such is the essential conception of *The Arlington Community*. I care not to advocate or insist upon the details, which are necessarily but tentative and provisional suggestions to meet the obvious difficulties involved in such a scheme. If I am told that the scheme itself is impracticable, I raise the question whether

Prolegomena

it be not rather a *necessity*. If it be asked whether the methods required for the purpose in view are compatible with morality, I still take higher ground, and ask whether a sound morality (a morality, that is to say, which holds us individually and collectively responsible for the consequences of our actions) does not impose upon us their employment. The attentive reader will do me the justice to observe that, in the person of Lord Grantchester, I have spared no pains to state, fully and fairly, all that may reasonably be urged against the ethics of my Utopia. But I must confess myself unable to meet the arguments of Mr. Joshua Arlington. It may be admitted, without reserve, that these arguments lead to conclusions repugnant to our prepossessions. But the question to be investigated is whether these prepossessions rest on any *permanent*

Prolegomena

ethical basis, and not merely upon habits of thought incidental to a phase in the evolution of society in which the claims of the individual have been *unduly* preferred to the interests of the race. It must be remembered that the opinions and sentiments of the future upon this head will not in any way be determined by our own, but will on the contrary be dictated by Necessity, whom I dare be known to think a better teacher than the Bishop of This or the Editor of That.

I should much like to hear that the Royal Society had appointed a Committee, or had requested the Government to form a Commission, in which physiologists and physicians, breeders, magistrates, administrators, military and naval officers, trainers, educational experts, and working men and women in earnest for the elevation of their class, might confer

Prolegomena

together as to the means which might even now be taken to promote by selection the improvement of the race.

Seventy thousand young Englishmen keep the peace of India, and one-half of them are infected with disease. And our people are content to have it so. O my God! I do not marvel at the wickedness of mankind, but year by year I marvel ever more and more at their stupidity.

In the pages of *The Arlington Community* I have by no means descended into hell. I have but explored the basement of the House of Life, to bring back my report of its foundations, its cellars, and perforce its drains. But while my task was yet in progress I experienced the need to return to light and air, and contemplate the gallant superstructure and the Garden of God wherein the Most High builded it: in

Prolegomena

other words, to lift the mind upward from the humbler to the nobler aspects of human life. In this endeavour it would neither be possible, nor in my opinion right, to ignore the moral ideals of the New Testament. And therefore, in *The Divine Brethren*, I have attempted to compare them with those of Hellenism and to effect a *modus vivendi* between these divergent types, by rejecting what is merely legal, superstitious, or fanatical in the Scriptures equally with what is sensual or corrupt in Greek life and art. And bearing in mind that the life of the body is, so to speak, but the *plinth* of human life, considered as a whole, I have in the concluding pages (the charge of Jesus to Hermes) suggested much that lies beyond the immediate scope of *Essays in Buff*.

“All things are possible to him that

Prolegomena

believeth." The apparent falsehood conceals a latent truth. Faith can *not* remove mountains—that requires dynamite. But conviction and enthusiasm have worked, and will yet work, wonders. The obstacles to progress which we deem insuperable are to us insuperable just because we deem them so. We toss and groan in a nightmare from which we need only to be waked. But we cannot wake, for lack of moral courage and intellectual energy.

"It is our will
That thus enchains us to permitted ill.

.

We are assured

Much may be conquered, much may be endured,
Of what degrades and crushes us. We know
That we have power over ourselves to do
And suffer, *what* we know not till we try,
But something nobler than to live and die."

--SHELLEY, *Julian and Maddalo*.

De Nuditate.

THERE are certain problems of universal interest which sooner or later force themselves upon the attention of every thinking man, and persistently demand a solution. One such is the problem of Metaphysics, the nature and reality of our knowledge of the external world. It is not so very long ago that, after many years' reflection, I solved that problem to my own satisfaction, and stated the result on paper. No editor would print that essay. Some disliked the subject, and some, I suppose, the treatment. Some, it may be conjectured, disagreed with the premises, and others with the conclusions. At all events it never found its way into print; but it was a great relief to have written it, and to know that

De Nuditate

the solution of the World Problem, neatly type-written, reposes in my drawer of rejected MSS. to be published by my executors *sumptibus posteritatis*. In the same spirit I approach the vexed question which forms the subject of this paper. I hasten to add that I am not going to renew a worn-out controversy. I have nothing to do with Mr. Horsley, or the British Matron, or the *Daily Telegraph*, or with the æsthetic fad and its representatives. *Où sont les neiges d'antan?* But Nature, Humanity, and Art continue, and on them I have something to say.

Wordsworth, when he retired to his native mountains, "with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary work that might live," esteemed it "a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature

De Nuditate

and Education had qualified him for such employment." The result was, to use Mr. Myers' phrase, an epic poem on his own education. I do not propose to inflict an epic on my readers. But it may be well to state the point of view from which my subject is approached. The present writer, then, like Democritus Junior, confesses himself *puer centum artium*, Jack of all trades and master of none; and having regard to the topic here discussed, he may more particularly describe himself as a swimmer, though a poor one; a gentleman, though a poor one; and, though not an artist, yet a genuine lover of art. He is at least unable to ignore the several standpoints of athletics, manners, art; and the problem which he has to solve is that of defining the relations between them.

Now it happens that the pastime of

De Nuditate

swimming, as it is practised in the heat of summer at any open-air bathing-place, is the only occupation in which, in our own age and country, the figure is brought into a natural relation with landscape and climate. Let me explain my meaning. A landscape is unvocal without life. The most beautiful park gains in beauty by the presence of a herd of deer, stepping lightly across the grass. But my lord Tom-Noddy, in a tweed suit, adds nothing in a general point of view to the beauty and harmony of the scene. Suppose, however, that the young gentleman, on a torrid summer's day, goes down to the river with his companions, for a bathe. As soon as his clothing is laid aside, he becomes a part of Nature, and Nature by his means is brought into relation with Humanity. In particular, there are two aspects in which this relation may be

De Nuditate

observed, the aspect of form and movement, and that of colour and tone. In the first, the body of Man may be compared to an edifice. It is a structure definitely related to the Law of Gravitation. Now, just as in Architecture the vertical members, the column or the buttress, convey the expression of energy transmitted or resisted, and the horizontal members, such as the stylobate and entablature, or the base-mold, string-course, and parapet, convey the impression of repose—not of weakness, but of power at rest—while the figures of a Grecian frieze, or the curves of Gothic tracery and vaulting, exhibit every degree of variation between these opposite extremes; so the fabric of external Nature is woven on the warp and woof of the vertical and horizontal line, the level of the water and the shore, the plain and the horizon,

De Nuditate

contrasting with the tree-trunk and the cliff, or varied by the undulation of hill and vale, of outward-bending boughs and floating leaves. The human figure, always the focus of the scene, whether in activity or repose, varying between the extremes of the erect and the recumbent posture, repeats and emphasises the general system of line and structure. Hence is derived a part, at least, of its decorative and architectonic value. I turn to the consideration of its significance in point of colour and tone.

It is now many years since, in the course of a long railway journey, I bestowed a summer afternoon in a visit to Salisbury Cathedral, and missing my way from the station, approached the Close by a devious route, and at last, crossing a little bridge, saw the spire rising high

De Nuditate

above the trees, and presently came in full view of the noblest building in England. Never shall I forget the impression then received. The emerald lawn, the dark elms which border it, the snowy cumuli floating overhead across the blue sky, and in the midst, a third with earth and heaven, the milk-white fabric of the incomparable cathedral. There was something added to Nature. Now, Humanity, in the grace of youth and health and activity, is in like manner something added to the external universe. And, in the scenes to which I refer, this effect depends partly upon the brilliant and harmonious contrast between the colour of the skin—warmed by exercise and glowing with the reaction of the bath—and the prevailing hues of earth and sea and sky, and partly also on the power of the wet skin to reflect the summer sun-

De Nuditate

shine, so that the figure stands out in the landscape like a gem upon the vestment of Nature.

Now, to any one who has observed and taken part in such scenes, the question (if he be a lover of Art) will inevitably present itself: What is Art doing for the presentation of this theme—the figure in its natural relation to light and atmosphere and scenery? Would not the answer generally be: Oh, the artist is studying in the Life school, or painting the professional model in the conventional pose among all the properties of the London studio? One is tempted to reply: That's no good at all. In that way you may produce a study; but hardly a picture, a work of art, a representation of Nature. So did not Pheidias and Praxiteles. A modern artist should, before all things, *learn to swim*. He should

De Nuditate

associate with athletes, observe their natural movements and attitudes, and watch their exercises. Then, in due time, Pater's wish might be fulfilled, and Oxford find her sculptor. But Sculpture, though it animates the marble and perpetuates the fleeting vigour of human life, cannot represent that relation of the figure to its surroundings which I have tried to indicate. Mr. Tuke has made a serious effort in this direction; but there are two points upon which I am disposed to quarrel with him, the tone of colour and the selection of form. When I saw Mount's Bay in May 1896, I am sure the water was much bluer, and the boys bathing in it much pinker, than they appear either in "The Diver" or in "August Blue." And this artist seems to show a preference for somewhat lanky and angular forms. Watch a school of

De Nuditate

boys enter the water. They will not every one of them present a graceful figure. But there will always be a grace diffused among them, lying partly in their movements and partly in the grouping of their forms. The two pictures above mentioned do not sufficiently suggest this. What is the use of Realism except to realise the Beautiful?

It should always be remembered that a model is a specimen of humanity. And it may therefore be questioned whether the artist would not do well to select his models from the classes which have been reared and trained under the most favourable conditions. Nor in the case discussed would this present any very serious difficulty—at least in the summer holidays; for no lad of any spirit is ever out of the water when he can possibly be in it. The

De Nuditate

artist, of course, must be prepared to paint *en plein air*.

It is a question how far a satisfactory treatment of such subjects can be obtained by Photography. Many people will dogmatically deny that Photography is an art at all. I am only concerned to observe that it is a means of securing a transcript of certain aspects of nature, and that the means may be employed with more or less of taste, judgment, and imagination on the part of the operator. I was led to these remarks by looking over some photographic figure-studies from Taormina. The photographer (Von Gloeden) had at his command a landscape and climate of peculiar beauty, but he has hardly made of them the use which one would expect. It seems to have been his aim rather to furnish useful memoranda for artists than to produce results

De Nuditate

having an artistic character of their own.¹ A photograph of a man's back does not make a picture. A model placed in some artificial posture, assumed for no other purpose than to be thus photographed, leaves on the mind the impression of an insect mounted for the microscope; and when we are dealing with humanity such an impression creates repugnance. Nevertheless, some of these photographs show the effect of glowing sunshine upon graceful figures, and make us wish that Von Gloeden had better employed his opportunities. The aim should, I think, have been to get rid of all that suggests the model, the pose, and the studio, and to bring the youthful male figure into con-

¹ The following examples deserve more favourable notice:—viz., Nos. 248, 539, 1199, 1251, 1256, 1376, 1460; but this *artist's* aim is the exact opposite of mine.

De Nuditate

nection with the light and air, the land and sea, of that lovely region. Above all, the figures should have been naturally employed, and grouped with the rhythm arising from a common occupation. The difficulty of a motionless representation of activity has been perfectly overcome by the sculptors of the Discobolus and the Borghese Gladiator. The art here lies in the selection of the moment. Our artists should bring their athletes to the water's edge, and represent them poised for the dive; or set them running races, and depict them at the start; or wrestling, or quoit-playing, while others watch the game and wait to take their turn. The beautiful harmony between the human figure and that of the horse which we see upon the Parthenon frieze might be reproduced in a horse-loving country such as England. A scrimmage at football

De Nuditate

would afford a splendid decoration for a pediment. Every bathing-place should be provided with its cricket pitch and lawn-tennis ground. Mr. Passmore Edwards—

“But, my dear sir, you are forgetting Mrs. Grundy!”

Heaven bless the good lady! is my reply, and keep her in her proper station, which is not the realm of Nature, neither is it that of Art. As the Irish chairman expressed his fixed resolve to be neither partial nor impartial, I would say that Art should be neither decent nor indecent, equally remote from prudery and prurience, from coarseness and *mauvaise honte*. The ideal to aim at is the manly simplicity of a well-bred youth. Decorum, as distinct from morality, is a matter of time and place. In the language of Ecclesiastes, there is a time to strip, and

De Nuditate

a time to dress. For a bathe, the garb of nature; for the Park, a frock-coat and top-hat. But it is the first, and not the second, with which Art is concerned: the form of Man, not the handiwork of the tailor. An athlete by the river's brim is a proper subject for the artist; a provincial mayor in his robes of office is (generally) an improper subject. That is to say, the artist is better employed in rendering the naked youth in all the beauty and vigour of early manhood, than in depicting the full-blown *bourgeois* in all the attributes of vulgar magnificence. But it may be admitted that the latter subject is perhaps better suited than the former to a place of fashionable assembly like the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy. In production you must elect between the requirements of art and those of social convention. It is in regard to

De Nuditate

the destination of your work that the question of decorum arises. If I were a millionaire, I would build a circular swimming-bath, covered in by a dome, lighted like that of the Pantheon from a central eye, resting on a solid basement, and lined with an Ionic colonnade containing the dressing benches, and supporting a gallery for the spectators at public competitions. And I would engage the best available sculptors to decorate the colonnade and the gallery with statues of our athletes and friezes of their sports. Or I would furnish the pavilions of our athletic grounds with halls in which our painters should achieve that representation of the figure in its natural relation to landscape and climate which forms the subject of this paper. If, however, the P.R.A. should paint a portrait of some distinguished Blue for exhibition at

De Nuditate

the Academy, the subject should no doubt be clothed as he would appear in the Inter - University Sports. A group of swimmers should either be frankly stripped or covered with the simple three-cornered garment now generally worn, which leaves free the limbs and conforms to the lines of the figure. I cannot see the use of such expedients as placing a bunch of vine leaves on a youth's stomach in order to conceal his sex, or making the principal figure of a painting turn his back on the spectator. *Qui s'excuse s'accuse.* The apology creates the offence.

It is important to bear in mind the distinction between the portraiture of an individual and the representation of a scene. In the treatment of the nude figure, the method of sculpture appears more appropriate to the former, and that of painting to the latter. But in

De Nuditate

either case it is the province of the artist to educe the ideal which is latent in the actual. In the inevitable application of photography to this class of subject the second or pictorial aim is certainly to be preferred. There we can only expect a literal copy of reality, leaving, however, to the operator the choice, the grouping, and the aspect of his material. To obtain a successful result would require on the part of our photographers something of the qualities of the artist, with the hearty co-operation of the athletes who should supply his subject. It is not a question between decorum and the reverse, but between intelligence and banality, between good taste and bad. It should not be difficult in such a summer as that of 1899 to obtain results of real beauty and decorative value. "Art," said William

De Nuditate

Blake, "is naked beauty displayed;"
and, postulating the exclusion of the
sensual, I have nothing to add to the
verdict.

Last and highest, his labour's goal,
To God the nighest, a living soul,
Head of the world, her mouth of praise,
The peer of angels began his days.

Erect, secure, o'er Earth he trod,
The fairest work of Creating God;
His symmetric beauty, his form, his will,
One perfect life as one fulfil.

His heritage Strength, and Joy his dower,
Filled with Desire, and armed with Power,
The works of God alone he knew,
And, with his Maker, created too.

And when at last he laid him down,
Glad Earth received him to her own;
A garnered fruit, a seed secure,
God's Image, that must aye endure.

Miss Whitworth's Walk.

LONG ago, before princesses bicycled in Battersea Park, or any southern ear had heard the terms of golf, when lawn tennis was a comparative novelty, and fathers had been known to discountenance "that jumping over the net," as a practice undesirable for their daughters, Miss Whitworth went for a walk in the woods of Saywell Hall. It was a hot afternoon in June; the thermometer stood at eighty degrees in the shade. The elder ladies of the party had retired to their rooms after luncheon, with some pretence of writing letters; Miss Whitworth's mother frankly declared that she intended to take a nap. The young men had gone out for a smoke under the trees,

Miss Whitworth's Walk

and talked of a bathe in the river. Miss Whitworth found the house suffocating. Being left alone by the dispersal of the party, she took her parasol and strolled away by herself beneath the shade of the timber bordering the park.

Julia Whitworth was even then no longer in her first youth. She was thirty years of age, a tall and handsome woman, but, as many said, cold and sarcastic. She had a reputation for good sense, and a few bore testimony from experience to her good feeling, her helpfulness and generosity where practical help was required. But she hated gush, and disliked enthusiasm of any kind, which she felt to be either insincere, or else to exact from her sympathies which she could not give, capacities which she did not possess. A dame of the Primrose League,

Miss Whitworth's Walk

who desired Miss Whitworth's further acquaintance, once said of her that she was "such a perfect lady." That was quite true; but Miss Whitworth would have preferred it to be taken for granted. Her family held a very good position, and they lived to perform its duties, as these were esteemed in their set. To that function Miss Whitworth had been bred from childhood, and it would have been strange if she had failed in its discharge. Her education had included in its scope the doctrine and practice of the Church of England, as conceived and taught by the mingled common-sense and prejudice of her mother, and by the clergymen, always of safe and moderate views, whose churches she had attended from her infancy. She went regularly to two services on Sunday, and one on the principal Saints' days, and communi-

MISS Whitworth's Walk

cated once a month, simply because she thought it her duty to do so. What she had been taught she accepted, as she accepted the movement of the earth round the sun, not as a personal conviction, or as the result of inquiry, either on her own part or on that of anybody else, but simply as a matter of course, and as, under other circumstances, she would have accepted with indifference the movement of the sun round the earth. For precisely the same reasons, and from the same motive of duty, she was a member of the Primrose League, though she heartily despised its absurdities. Her one rule, which underlay all her actions, so that she herself was hardly conscious of it, was "Stick to the position and the creed in which you have been brought up, and do the duties arising therefrom to the best of your ability." Yet she

Miss Whitworth's Walk

was not a bigot. She numbered Roman Catholics among her friends, though she did not like "perverts." She knew many Liberals, of good family, though she regarded the occasional presence of a Radical in her circle as an aberration, to be borne with cheerfully, like the other *contretemps* of life. Her one difficulty was, as might be expected, of a practical nature. She had been educated to fill a certain place in the world, that was her task in life; and, as she often told herself, it was all she was fit for. All her occupations turned upon the accidents of social position, the externals of social intercourse. Yet whenever she went to Church, or opened a "good" book, she was told that the Christian must renounce the world, equally with the flesh and the devil, and must regard this life merely as the arduous prepara-

Miss Whitworth's Walk

tion for a better. How was she to reconcile these conflicting standards? Some of her friends had solved the problem by joining a sisterhood, or by becoming nurses. Miss Whitworth felt that she was not good enough for the former course, or clever enough for the latter. She was not confident of the success of her friends in the vocations which they had chosen. She was certain that she herself did not possess the requisite qualifications. And surely her obvious duty was to her mother and her own family and acquaintance. Yet how was their mode of life, innocent and becoming as it might be, to be harmonised with the inexorable requirements of the Gospel? And even if she were to renounce society, she did not feel it in her to become a saint. What, then, could she do? she asked herself, as

Miss Whitworth's Walk

she strolled along beneath the trees of Saywell Park.

Seeking coolness, she had entered a path which led for some distance just within the edge of a wood and then gradually diverged into its recesses. At length the path terminated at a gate opening on a sunny field. Not wishing to expose herself to the heat, or to return to the house, Miss Whitworth retraced her steps a little way, and then took a narrow winding track which descended through a thicket of undergrowth, she knew not whither. After a while the descent ceased. High bushes were all about her, and she was beginning to wonder where she was, when the noise of running water and the sound of voices struck simultaneously upon her ear. Turning in the direction whence the voices came, she beheld between

Miss Whitworth's Walk

the boughs a very unexpected sight. The river, overshadowed by willow trees and branching shrubs, came towards her from the left below the wood. Upon the right it opened out into a bright expanse of water above the neighbouring weir. Between the bushes and the river (it was but a narrow stream) lay a strip of soft green turf, and beyond the water a wide meadow now put up for hay, an ocean of translucent emerald interspersed with the gold of innumerable buttercups, and bounded in the distance by a lofty hedge overtopped with elms which stood out rich and dark against the summer sky. The quiet beauty and seclusion of the spot, the glowing atmosphere of the June day, were enhanced and animated by the presence in the foreground of the naked figures of the young men whom Miss Whitworth had last seen at the

Miss Whitworth's Walk

luncheon-table. The curate stood by the river-brink, his back towards her, his feet, which were planted wide apart, clad in blue cotton socks, his hands clasped behind his head, which bore a straw hat. This completed his costume. The rest were in the garb of Paradise. On a willow-stump, upon the farther side of the stream, her brother stood erect, facing her, though unconscious of her presence. He was a handsome fellow with thick curly hair, and had often been chaffed on his resemblance to the bank clerk in flannels whom a young lady in *Punch* mistook for a Greek god. Now the flannels lay there discarded, and his sister thought to herself that he was more like a Greek god than ever. A third bather was seated on the bank beside the curate, dangling his legs in the water. The heir of the house was

Miss Whitworth's Walk

racing up the stream, calling on the others to follow. Another moment, Herbert Whitworth's arms were poised above his head, and his body cleft air and water like an arrow. He had been at Eton, and knew how to dive. In an instant his head rose above the surface, and he made fair to overtake the first swimmer. The third now pushed off from the bank, while the curate walked along it, whisking a towel in one hand, and calling after the rest, in response to urgent invitations, "I can't go in again; I must get back for service at half-past four." Soon the swimmers turned, and Miss Whitworth watched them coming down stream at full speed, each man's wet shoulder gleaming in the sunshine, his arm flashing through the air, his glossy head pillowed on the water. Then they scrambled out on to

Miss Whitworth's Walk

the bank, and commenced towelling vigorously. Miss Whitworth recollected herself, and began at once to beat a retreat very quickly and quietly up the narrow path, nor did she pause for an instant until she reached the wider path from which it diverged. Then she made her way homeward leisurely and thoughtfully. It was all over in two or three minutes, but that jolly picture of naked youth and health and beauty remained fixed upon her mental vision, among the permanent memories of her life.

She had been a good deal startled, a little shocked, and not a little fascinated by the scene upon which she had thus unexpectedly stumbled. She felt vexed with herself, as if she had committed some impropriety, yet she certainly had no intention of intruding upon the bathers. "I suppose I ought not to

Miss Whitworth's Walk

have watched them," she reflected, "but really I couldn't help it." And then the haunting question presented itself, Was it wrong? Not on their part, was the answer of common-sense. She knew the young men well enough to feel pretty sure of the innocence and purity and manliness of their character and conduct. Yet how different were the standards of men and women! Judged by the abstract rules of feminine propriety, the scene she had just witnessed was, to say the least of it, savage and barbarous. But she felt instinctively that these rules were here inapplicable. What, then, was their intrinsic value? It might well be that in the order of Nature, or in that of Providence, there should be different rules of behaviour for the two sexes, and she could understand the necessity of reserve in their

Miss Whitworth's Walk

mutual relations. But what was the right way of thinking in these matters?

And again that scene by the water, in its complete freedom, alike from all grossness and vulgarity, and from all reserve or *mauvaise honte*, came before her mind's eye. The thought of its beauty struck her, and she exclaimed half aloud, "How those young men enjoy life!" And as the experience of the afternoon began to focus in her mind many floating observations and reflections, hitherto unconnected, she began to see that this frank recognition of the body in the totality of its attributes, the physical life in all the harmony of its functions, needs, pleasures, and capacities, involving as it did the aim of acquiring such bodily perfection as each might be able to attain, this must be, and ought to be, the fundamental fact in a

Miss Whitworth's Walk

young man's life, not the highest but the first thing, and that on which the rest must depend.

And pursuing the same train of thought she realised for the first time that of the physical life so lived, love, marriage, and parentage formed the normal and necessary outcome. And then she began to contrast the new point of view thus gained with that to which she was better accustomed, that in which marriage was indeed regarded as the end for which a woman was born and brought up, and without which she was a failure, an "old maid," but in which nevertheless marriage itself was regarded chiefly as an opportunity by which a certain social position, with the means of maintaining it, was to be acquired, or might, on the other hand, be lost. The bride's parents might look forward to the prospects of

Miss Whitworth's Walk

her children; to the young women of Miss Whitworth's acquaintance, marriage appeared chiefly as an affair of excitement, ceremony, or ambition, a thing of trousseaux and wedding breakfasts, of presents and furniture, and the new dignity of mistress of a household. And in the background, an inevitable accident, lay the terrors and the agonies of childbirth, with its reward—a theme to be cried and triumphed over when it came, but not otherwise to be mentioned save with bated breath. Was that a right way of looking at the matter, or a wrong way?

And meanwhile the body might be disguised or adorned in order to attract, dressed or even exposed, so far as fashion sanctioned; its claims ignored or suppressed except when illness forced them upon an unwilling attention; its health

Miss Whitworth's Walk

neglected in comparison with the demands of society, or even risked upon their account; but never was it honestly recognised as the basis of human life, the material instrument by whose means, if at all, that life must be wrought into harmony. Miss Whitworth had a good constitution and plenty of active occupation; she was a good walker, and rode well, if a little stiffly. But riding was for her more of the nature of a public ceremony than of a physical enjoyment; hunting she thought unsuitable for ladies; and indeed she had been brought up to regard any form of violent exercise as unbecoming to a woman. She had heard her father say that a woman should never perspire, and it was essential to her self-respect (thus had she been trained) always to comport herself with the dignity proper to Miss Whitworth. But now, now, the

Miss Whitworth's Walk

ideal of physical manhood had presented itself to her, and with it the thought that there must no less exist a canon or type of womanhood, not to be neglected with impunity. It seemed to her all of a sudden that the women she knew were only occupied with the shows and outsides of things, that their views and their lives were almost wholly hollow and unreal, while the great underlying realities of life were utterly ignored by them. And old words came into her mind with a new meaning, "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" The elder married women of her acquaintance, such of them at least as were mothers, seemed by virtue of love, joy, and sorrow, to have a truer grip on the real issues of life, a deeper experience, a more generous sympathy. But the old maids! Miss Whitworth

Miss Whitworth's Walk

positively shuddered! They were often amiable, and usually religious. But their pettiness, their pre-occupation with the most wretched trifles, their caprices, quarrels, resentments, affectations, their exaggerated regard for the proprieties, their lack of real dignity, their want of genuine happiness, of any fixed duties or serious purpose in life! And she thought of one in especial, her friend of former years, Lena Severn, whom she remembered in youth, seeming bright with promise, full of ambition and of apparently undeveloped capacities, now sinking year by year, a disappointed and embittered woman, deeper and ever deeper, in a mire of fads and follies, of schemes and squabbles, under vague embarrassments of mind and body, to which it seemed equally impossible to assign a name or a remedy. "O God,

Miss Whitworth's Walk

help me, that I may never be like that!" cried Miss Whitworth, and then added, "and help her too, poor thing, out of all her troubles." It was a sincere prayer. And then came the thought which often crosses the minds of women, that in the dispensations of Providence the harder lot had been assigned to the weaker sex. Was it so indeed? Or was it partly their own fault?

It seemed to her that the life which she lived, that of an unmarried woman in society, was equally a sham, whether it was regarded from the standpoint of nature or from that of religion, whether it was compared with the genuine life of the body or with that of the soul. And then came a fresh difficulty: how could anybody reconcile these two? It was not so much that they were contrary to one another, as that they had nothing

Miss Whitworth's Walk

at all in common. Who could expect or desire that those young men down at the riverside should regard this life as a vale of tears, an agonising combat with the powers of evil, to be maintained with unremitting vigilance, at the cost of all that human nature holds dear? It was inconceivable. And yet religion claimed absolute supremacy over all alike.

“Well,” she said at last, “I suppose I am trying to reconcile divergent ideals; and I can’t do it, because I’m not clever.” At this point she heard a quick step behind her. It was the curate. “Have you been driven out of doors by the heat, Miss Whitworth?” he said. “We have all been bathing in the river. You will excuse my hurrying on, or I shall be late for service.” He lifted the straw hat, and strode on before her. She

Miss Whitworth's Walk

watched him with a fresh interest. Hitherto she had considered him as a very inadequate mouthpiece for the solemn utterances of the Bible and the Church, and when she met him at table she had thought him not quite well-bred. Now it struck her with a kind of novelty that under all externals lay a man, young, inexperienced, immature, but with just the same capacity for pleasure or pain, happiness or suffering, as the rest of us. And this new-found sympathy extended itself more widely until it took in the dependants with whom she was ordinarily brought into contact, servants and tradespeople, farmers and labourers, with their wives and children. And the thought struck her, with a glow of comfort, that perhaps among all these she might find something to live for.

Miss Whitworth's Walk

"Well," she said to herself again, "I'm not clever, but I know what I'll do. I don't suppose I shall ever marry, but I won't be a mere 'old maid.' I'll just try to do my duty in that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call me, as the soldier does his drill, to the best of my ability, without taking it for a bit more than it is worth. And opportunities of doing good and helping other people will come if I look out for them. I'll always encourage every one I know to marry any decent man. And I'll always remember that the life of the body comes first. And as for young men not caring about religion, I suppose sorrow will come to them too in time, and when it does come, they won't meet it any the worse for being trained in manliness and having a happy youth to look back upon."

Miss Whitworth's Walk

The bell was now tolling for afternoon service. But Julia Whitworth did not attend. She just went to her own room and wrote as kindly as she could to Lena Severn. And before she had finished, her mother came to her door and took her down to tea, which was laid out on the lawn. She never told any one what had passed that afternoon. But in her own mind she always regarded it as the epoch of her conversion.

Some years afterwards, Miss Whitworth was being discussed in her absence by a party of her contemporaries. "She is so much improved," said one; "she used to be so satirical." "She's very good," said another; "I know a lot of people whom she has helped. And she's awfully good at advice. And she's not a bit of an old maid. She never tries to prevent any one getting married.

Miss Whitworth's Walk

And she seems to understand young men so well. I suppose it's having that brother of hers." "What a pity she's never married!" said they all. "I suppose she never will now," said the first; "it's a great pity." "So it is," said everybody.

It was about the same period that a certain professor at the breakfast-table, when the *Times* was offered him by his hostess, ungallantly observed that ladies never read beyond the Births, Deaths, and Marriages. Miss Whitworth, who was sitting next him, was nettled. "Well," she said, "after all, births, deaths, and marriages make up human life." The professor was taken aback. "Madam," he said, "you are quite right. You must be a biologist."

Which was the highest compliment he could pay.

The Arlington Community.

MY cousin, Lord Grantchester, is a man old enough to be my father, a typical English gentleman of unimpeachable respectability, scrupulously conscientious, and known to his few intimates as a humble and sincere Christian. I was therefore the more surprised when he said to me one evening that he was expecting to receive a visit from Mr. Joshua Arlington. It was the very end of the session, London was almost empty, and we were dining alone together in his great town house. "Mr. Joshua Arlington," I repeated, with a mixture of inquiry and astonishment, no doubt expressed in my voice. "Yes," said my cousin quietly; "do you know the name?"

The Arlington Community

and as he spoke he looked at me with a certain curiosity. "I have heard the name," was my reply, "but I think it can hardly be the same man." "The founder of an American community," explained Lord Grantchester, observing me to see what I knew or thought about it. "That's the man," I said; "but is it not a very extraordinary, and indeed, as I have heard, a grossly immoral community?" "That is what I want to know," said Lord Grantchester seriously. "And he is coming here himself to tell you all about it?" I pursued. "He is to be here at nine o'clock," was the reply. Presently my cousin continued: "I met him some time ago at a little society of persons interested in social and philanthropic movements to which I belong, and which is often visited by reformers of the most varied opinions.

The Arlington Community

I liked his looks, and fell, as it happened, into conversation with him before I discovered who he was. And then my astonishment was equal to your own just now, for I had heard the same report of his community that you have. Now Mr. Arlington may be in error—indeed, if I am to employ my own judgment upon the rumours which I have heard, he must be deeply and grievously in error—but I cannot think him other than an honest man, of upright purpose as well as of determined will. And as to the community, enough was said about it in our conversation to convince me that it is at all events a most remarkable experiment, even granting that it may prove a fatal one.” “What, then, really is its nature?” I inquired after a pause. “I think we had better hear that from the founder,” said Lord Grantchester.

The Arlington Community

Punctually at nine o'clock the expected visitor was shown into the library. Although it was August the weather was wet and cold, and a fire had been lighted for the sake of cheerfulness. Lord Grantchester and his guest were soon seated on either side of it, at a distance which gradually diminished in the course of a prolonged discussion. I took a third chair, opposite the fireplace, but turned a little towards Mr. Arlington. The latter refused all refreshment, and was evidently as eager to proceed to the exposition of his principles and aims as we were desirous to be informed of them. By this time my curiosity was thoroughly aroused, and I could not but closely observe the striking personality of our visitor.

Mr. Joshua Arlington, as I afterwards learned, was sixty-eight years of age,

The Arlington Community

though at a first glance he might have been supposed ten years younger. He was in morning dress, a neat suit of black which became him very well, nor did he offer any apology for this circumstance. He was little, if at all, above the medium height, but of massive build, with broad shoulders and powerful frame, a certain tendency to corpulence being, as I judged, kept under by strict abstemiousness and resolute activity. In countenance, as in person, he seemed to me something between John Bright and John Bull. A large head, with grey hair long though scanty, the face clean shaven, exhibiting bold muscular features and the fresh complexion of a child, the clear blue eyes that looked you through and through, the decisive but not unkindly mouth, the pervading impression of a certain large simplicity of nature,

The Arlington Community

capable alike of unflinching keenness and unselfish generosity — these things remain with me from our sole interview. My cousin was certainly right. It was impossible to look at Mr. Arlington and to doubt his good faith, or to see him without being impressed by his energy and determination. He struck me as one who might possibly form a superficial and therefore erroneous judgment, but whose judgment would always be the result of an independent effort to grapple with reality, and when formed would be fearlessly translated into action. His manners were unpolished but manly and straightforward, with the dignity of earnestness supported by strong convictions and accompanied by a sense of personal responsibility for the community which looked to him as its founder. Here indeed was a man and a leader of men.

The Arlington Community

I fear that I can do but scant justice to the vigorous narrative in which Mr. Arlington related the beginnings of the brotherhood out of which the now famous community had grown. "It all began," he said, as well as I can recall his words, "near fifty years ago, when I was one of many young fellows in New York City, with our living to get and the world before us. We did our work because we knew we had to, and then what time we had to ourselves, and what money we had to spare—it wasn't very much—went to our pleasures. And as for these, why, as some of us used to say, we were neither better nor worse than other young men. But there was one among us all who was not content with that. He was a Dane, by name Nicolsen, whose father had brought him over to the States when he was a boy.

The Arlington Community

I think his parents were both dead at this time, and the young fellow had to fend for himself and carve out his own fortune if he could. He was the tallest and strongest man amongst us, a fine honest fellow, outspoken and impulsive, with a strong will and a passionate temper. We all liked him and looked up to him. So one night we were all together, drinking, smoking, and talking, and as often happens when a lot of young fellows get together, the talk turned upon women. Do you know, my lord, how young men *do* talk?" broke off the speaker, with a quick glance, first at my cousin and then at myself. "Yes, I think so," said Lord Grantchester, not over confidently. Arlington resumed: "One man made all the rest laugh by saying, 'We can do neither with them nor without them.'

The Arlington Community

We all wanted to marry, at all events the most and the best of us, but we were pretty well agreed that we could not afford it, and probably should not be able to do so for years to come. And some, not by any means the youngest of us, thought it was too soon to tie yourself down like that. If you did, you would have half-a-dozen children in no time, and where would you be then? And so the talk turned on the alternative course, that of keeping a mistress, whether, as most of us agreed, it was cheaper than marriage, and whether, as some said, it was good for the health. And so on, and so on." I was facing Mr. Arlington as he told his story, but I knew that over my shoulder my cousin's countenance was getting graver and graver. Yet he listened without moving, and Arlington went on: "All

The Arlington Community

this while Nicolsen sat smoking and saying very little. Then he got up, and stood leaning against the table for a moment, and stretched himself. I can see him now with his long arms and legs, and his fair hair very near the gas-light. Then he took up his pipe, his favourite pipe which we used to call his fetish, and eyed it for a bit, and then he deliberately flung it into the fire. And then he took his glass, which was three parts full, and flung that after the pipe. The glass cracked and the liquor spurted. We all stopped talking, and for a moment there was dead silence. And the next thing we heard was Nicolsen's voice saying, 'Damn! I can't stand this any longer.' Some of us really thought he had gone out of his mind, and one man showed it. For he got up and went gently to Nicolsen

The Arlington Community

and said to him, 'What's the matter, old chap?' putting his hand upon his shoulder as he did so. And Nicolsen patted him gently in return, and turned himself round with his back to the fire, and said, 'No, I'm not mad, and I'm not drunk, but I tell you what it is, you fellows, I'm sick. We're *men*, aren't we? and we've got to marry, that is to mate, and get offspring like other creatures, whether we will or no. That's Bible truth. It's God's law, if you believe in God; and if you don't, it's the law of nature, the law in our bodies, and we can't get away from it.' 'That's all very well, old chap,' said half-a-dozen of us, 'but what's to be done?' 'I'll tell you what I'm going to do,' said Nicolsen, 'if you'll let me speak. Here are we, all of us, missing the best years of our life, drinking and smoking and whoring,

The Arlington Community

some of us, at all events—I don't say I'm any better than the rest—and playing the fool, and *being respectable*, and all the while letting go the very pith and essence of a man's life, which is to be a husband and a father, to have the love of an honest girl, and your children growing up around you. It's a man's part, and a man's right, and I mean to have it, come what may. At all costs, and at all risks, I will have my mate, a wife and not a whore, if I never smoke a pipe, or drink a glass of grog, or wear a black coat for the rest of my life. She may be poor, she may be ignorant; I don't care, provided she's clean and honest and sound, and will love me and be loyal to me. So help me, God!' And he thumped the table with his great fist, so that it shook the room. Then we all cheered him till the place rang again.

The Arlington Community

And when we'd done he said quietly, 'I'm going West; who'll join?' And then he looked all round at us to see if any would come forward. And I got up and went to him and shook hands with him, and he gripped mine in his like iron. And from that time forth we were like brothers as long as he lived. Then two others said they'd join, and two or three more said they'd think it over; and so the brotherhood began."

"But this brotherhood of which you speak," said Lord Grantchester, "is that identical with your present community?"

"No," replied Mr. Arlington; "but without the brotherhood there had been no community. It could never have come into being, it could not now exist or be maintained, without a band of young men and young women in earnest for the objects which we then set before

The Arlington Community

us, and so much in earnest that they were prepared to set them before every other consideration. Thus the brotherhood was the condition precedent of the community." "And your objects?" said my cousin. "At the first," was the reply, "they were three. One was plain living. Without that we could not hope to make our way. We turned teetotallers and gave up smoking, not because we thought a pipe or a glass of beer a sin, but because we thought a man could do without these things if he would, and we knew we should want every penny we could turn for something better. It was a pinch if you like, but we were on our mettle, and I don't say but what we were a little proud of our self-denial. And our second object was what is called nowadays 'physical culture.' We didn't call it by that name,

The Arlington Community

but we made it a part of our plan not only to avoid whatever might in any way impair our health—thank God! we were all pretty strong—but that we would do all in our power to make our bodies as strong and fit as we could. The opportunities for that sort of thing were not so many then as they are now, and that was one reason why most of us preferred to seek our livelihood by farm labour. We lay hard, and rose early, and didn't much care what we wore. And we worked as we had never worked before, for you see now we had something to work for, which we hadn't in the days before Nicolsen lost his temper and said 'Damn!' Oh, how often have I praised God for that blessed oath! It saved half of us, body and soul. So we worked to get a wife, and then we

The Arlington Community

worked harder still to keep her. For our third object, I must tell you, which of course was the most important of all, was to get married within eighteen months. That was a compromise between one year, which seemed too soon, and two years, which we thought too far off. And we weren't much behind-hand."

Mr. Arlington's eyes twinkled as he said this, but the smile gave place to a sigh as he recalled that strenuous past; and when I looked at my cousin I saw him watching the speaker with unaffected sympathy. And I recalled what I had heard of Lord Grantchester's early love-match, which had left him a widower twenty years before. Arlington controlled himself and resumed.

"As we talked things over there came to be an understanding among us

The Arlington Community

as to the choice of our mates. Please God, we desired healthful offspring, and that came to be our fourth object. *That made the Community*, as you will see presently. Therefore our wives must be strong, and not only for that reason, but because we could not at first expect to make things easy for them. And on this account we would seek hard-working industrious girls no better off than ourselves, who would not miss the comforts we could not give them. Was that selfish, do you think? They did not think so. God bless them for it, wherever they be! For my dear wife is gone, and very few of us, men or women, who joined the brotherhood in those early days are now left alive. We had nothing to offer them but ourselves, our labour, and our love. And that, praise Heaven! was enough for them. We had a hard

The Arlington Community

fight for it, but we were resolved, if we must go under, to go under fighting still. And most of us pulled through. I think God prospered me. I hope it is not presumptuous for me to think so. And so the Community exists and thrives to-day."

The speaker paused. Lord Grantchester put a question, "The brotherhood, then, was it merged in the Community at Arlington?" "The original brotherhood," was the reply, "was entirely merged in our Community; but there are many similar brotherhoods now existing among young men in various parts of the States, and these supply us with our best recruits. There is no open propaganda, we do not hold meetings, we issue no publications, nor do we figure in the press. The brotherhoods are known to the world at large, if known at all, merely as athletic clubs.

The Arlington Community

But the members have no difficulty in winning new members, and so the movement spreads in ever-widening circles, or rather, to change my metaphor, gathers impetus in its progress. For the forces of nature and the best instincts of youth are on our side, and we are assured that they will and must prevail. And every brotherhood keeps steadily in view the four great objects which it exists to promote, Plain Living, Physical Culture, Early Marriage, and Healthy Offspring. And our young men choose partners who are ready and willing to enter into these aims, and prefer them to money and amusement, to smart dresses and nice furniture, to a good house and social distinction." "Yes," said Lord Grantchester, "that is well. But what provision do you make for the future? For sickness, or hard times?

The Arlington Community

For the woman's confinement, and the rearing of your families? For educating your children, and giving them a fair start in life?" "To answer that question," said Mr. Arlington, "I must describe to you our Community as it exists to-day." My cousin and I were eager to hear his account.

"And first of all," the speaker continued, "you must understand that it is a Collectivist community, engaged in co-operative production. The soil of Arlington, the buildings which stand upon it, our farms and factories, our machinery, the capital invested in the various industries, are all the property of the Community as a whole, and are managed by trustees elected by the members. Work is expected from all who are fit for work, and great part of our annual income is expended in the

The Arlington Community

wages paid in return. These wages are mainly spent within the Community, which supplies its members with all the necessities of life. Any surplus that a man or woman may have is likely to be invested in our savings-bank, for we think it not amiss that any one should have some small sum at command for special objects, personal or public, in which he may be interested. You would be surprised at our subscription-lists," he said with a smile. "For my part I have always been anxious to avoid swamping or crushing the individual initiative."

"Another part of our income," he continued, "goes to the reserve fund. And of course we are from time to time obliged to employ large sums on machinery and appliances of one kind or another. Arlington is not a wealthy

The Arlington Community

community, though financially I believe it to be a sound one. If you were to see the place, you would, I dare say, think it a ramshackle collection of sheds. We have spent nothing on show, and have no luxuries. An especial motive for economy lies in the necessity, which in the future must press upon us more than in the past, of maintaining in comfort and respect the aged members of the Community. Still, year by year, we expend a sum, be it greater or be it less, on whatever may be the purposes which we judge most needful for the elevation of our common life. We have a fine climate, dry, except at certain seasons, and never unhealthy; a good supply of water-power, stone and timber within easy reach, and a branch railroad. All that is, so to speak, the material aspect of our Community."

The Arlington Community

“Of course,” said Lord Grantchester, “it is the moral or social aspect of which I am most anxious to be informed.” “And with us,” said Mr. Arlington, “that is the main thing; only that we consider the moral and social fabric of human life to include and rest upon a physical basis. I have told you of the four objects of our original brotherhood, and you will see that they were designed to satisfy the physical and moral needs of man and woman. When we began, these were personal aims. They were never *selfish* aims; on the contrary, the moral forces of brotherly sympathy and wedded love and parental affection proved of all things the most powerful to lift a man above himself. But it was only by degrees that we rose to the conception of a society in which the four objects of the brotherhood should

The Arlington Community

as far as possible be realised for all; in which, so far as such a result can be secured by human will, there should be none but healthful offspring, and the multiplication even of these should be restrained within such limits that it might be possible to rear them under the most favourable conditions and to give them as good a start in life as the wit of man could devise; in which illegitimacy and seduction and adultery should be well-nigh unknown, and prostitution a thing unheard of; in which the transmission of an enfeebled constitution, or a hereditary taint, should be deemed a crime, and made an impossibility; a Community whose glory should consist in the men and women that it bred, its solace in the mastery of evil, its hope in the improvement of the race. Such was now the object upon which

The Arlington Community

we flung ourselves with passionate zeal; we would allow no barrier of tradition, law, or religion, to stand in our way; and for this object we were prepared to make any sacrifice whatever. The whole function and relation of the sexes should, in our view, be so regulated and organised as to subserve in the highest possible degree the advancement of mankind. The result is something that has been called a New Morality, in which marriage—that is, in the last resort, the union of man and woman—is regarded not merely as the gratification of a physical instinct, or even the satisfaction of personal affection, but as the natural means towards a social end, the Procreation of the Best. In so far as this morality recognises and allows for the normal functions of sex, it rests upon the law of nature; in so far as it restricts

The Arlington Community

or even renounces these functions, it has for its governing principle the good of man. These are the powers on our side, and it is in vain that you contend against them."

"I am not at present contending against you," said Lord Grantchester; "the law of nature controlled by reference to the good of man—that might pass for a description of Christian marriage. But it is the working of your scheme of regulation of which I require to hear more than you have yet told us." "You shall hear," replied Mr. Arlington.

"You will understand," he went on, "that in the five-and-thirty years which have elapsed since the beginning of the Community, we who founded it have seen our own children grow up, and a third generation is now approaching maturity.

The Arlington Community

Now from our point of view and for our purpose, there is nothing of more importance than the training of the young. We conceive of Education as a complete training, physical, manual, moral, and intellectual, extending from infancy to maturity. We do not think that it should cease when boys and girls begin to earn their own living, or conversely, that they need not begin to learn their trade or occupation until 'education' is at an end. And in this training, as we assign an important place to physical development, so on the moral and intellectual side of the matter we esteem it of the utmost importance to inculcate a right conception of the body and its uses. We seek to bring up our young people in self-reverence and mutual respect, rather by assuming these dispositions than by express insistence

The Arlington Community

upon them. And we value all that you would call modesty or decorum, only in so far as it arises from these qualities and conduces to them. When it is so exaggerated, or unduly emphasised, that it tends rather to produce the opposite effect, it becomes, in our judgment, a very mischievous superstition. Hence, in the confidential instructions issued to parents and teachers among us, we urge them to be most careful, from the very first, to avoid anything which might suggest to the minds of young children the notion of indecency, or lead them to associate the idea of shame with the parts and functions of their bodies. You will excuse my mentioning these points," broke off the speaker, "which may perhaps seem to you trivial or offensive, but I am convinced that they have a

The Arlington Community

real importance in the moral training of the young." "I am quite in agreement with you," said Lord Grantchester seriously. Mr. Arlington resumed: "Just as we teach young children to exercise self-control, and to perform the functions of excretion at proper times and places, so even here we are careful to avoid exaggeration, not to encourage undue shrinking from observation, or lead the young to suppose that there is anything shameful in these necessary acts. In the same way, while we check any tendency to needless talk about such matters, yet when there is occasion to refer to them we use a certain plainness of speech, avoiding the silly euphemisms which only serve to foster self-consciousness and awaken curiosity. I am convinced that kind of thing is responsible for a good deal of harm. The aim

The Arlington Community

should be to avoid directing undue attention to such things." "I agree with every word," said my cousin emphatically. "So too," Arlington continued, "our children are accustomed from infancy to lay aside their clothing upon convenient occasions, which occur more often in our climate than they would here. We would have them to look upon clothing as a circumstance rather than a necessity, and hold it a virtue to be independent of the tailor. I should perhaps explain that our boys and girls are generally brought up at home with their parents until they are at least seven years old; that after that, still sleeping at home, they go together to their first school, and that a few years later they go to separate schools, where they sleep in dormitories under the supervision of their teachers. Now comes

The Arlington Community

the time when the boy has to be taught that a certain respect is due from him to the other sex, and that it is a part of this respect to cover the body in their presence. We do not say too much upon this head, and we supplement it by quietly teaching the lad that it is a part of manliness never to be ashamed of anything that is not *wrong*, and never to do anything that may give him cause for shame. And the girls receive analogous instruction from the women. Here we allow a greater degree of reserve and reticence than it would be reasonable to expect from the boys. We permit, that is, a difference of manners; what we do not allow is a double standard of morals."

"That is excellent," said Lord Grantchester, with some warmth. "You remind me," he went on, "of a very

The Arlington Community

painful episode in my own experience as a boy. I do not know that I have ever spoken of it to any one else, but it has a real bearing on what you tell us. I had the misfortune to lose my parents when I was very young, so young that I can scarcely remember them, and I was brought up, together with my sister Charlotte, in my grandfather's house by an unmarried aunt. A good, kind, pious, conscientious woman she was, according to her lights, but these led her to shroud everything connected with the body, above all the whole subject of sex, in the deepest mystery. I saw very little of my grandfather, and I stood in great awe of him. I was a delicate child, for years too delicate for school, and had my daily lessons from my sister's governess. The moral and religious training which I

The Arlington Community

received was almost wholly derived from my aunt's teaching. If she approached the matters we have been discussing at all, it was to lay stress upon the need of modesty, with the natural result of stimulating the self-consciousness of an over-sensitive mind. I learned of course from the Catechism that it was my duty to keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity, but I had not the remotest notion what chastity might be, and I should never have dared to ask. And then at fourteen I was judged strong enough for school, and carefully prepared, as far as Greek and Latin went, by the then vicar of Grantchester. I remember too some vaguely impressive warnings which he gave me, as to the temptations of school life. I listened in silence, feeling that I was being lectured, without understanding what he

The Arlington Community

meant. And so I was suddenly transferred from the moral atmosphere, I might almost say of the nursery, to that of a public school. Imagine the utter disturbance of my whole moral being! Every standard I had was set at nought, and a new and forbidden world opened out to me. My judgment was perplexed, my self-respect impaired. I was wretched, a sense of guilt grew upon me, and there was no one to whom I could resort for guidance or relief. But one day, in my first summer holidays at Grantchester, I went off by myself fishing. And I fell in with an old clergyman of the neighbourhood, who gave me luncheon, and talked to me, and won my confidence. I think he guessed that there was something on my mind. He drew me on, until suddenly I broke down, and burst out crying. Then it all came out. He

The Arlington Community

talked with me, and soothed me, and cheered me up, and restored tone to my mind. He told me plainly and simply all that it was then needful I should know. He prayed with me, and set me on the right track. I thank God for that day, as you do for your friend's resolution. If it had not been for that meeting, I might easily have grown up into a vicious man."

There was a minute's silence. Then said Mr. Arlington very gently, "There have been many in the same case, Lord Grantchester. But at Arlington that cannot happen. No part of our whole educational system has been more carefully planned than that which consists in imparting to the young, step by step, as we judge them prepared to receive it, all necessary information as to the organs and functions of sex. I think I

The Arlington Community

told you that we purposely employ upon occasion a certain plainness of speech. So we carefully teach a boy of eight or ten years old the proper term for every part of his body. Then we teach him by degrees, as a part of his lessons, the simplest data of physiology, the functions of breathing, circulation, digestion, and excretion, of the nerves, the brain and organs of sense, the structure of the bones and the action of the muscles, all as clearly and slowly and patiently as we can. And as far as possible we endeavour that all our children should know and love a country life, and become directly acquainted with the phenomena of nature. We show them the difference of sex in flowering plants, and explain in this way the principle of fertilisation. Side by side with this we teach them what we can of the

The Arlington Community

natural history of animals, and in time we make them acquainted with the process of reproduction among fishes, and the development of the embryo in the eggs of birds. At fifteen or sixteen it is time for a boy to be informed of the methods involved in the breeding and rearing of horses and cattle. Meanwhile we begin to give our lads, in classes of three or four at a time, the needful instruction as to the relation of the sexes in humanity, and what in our view is so closely connected therewith, the especial physical and moral aims of our own Community. You must remember that our young men are married very young, and before that time comes we take care that they are fully instructed in all that for this purpose they ought to know. And so, *mutatis mutandis*, with the girls, who of

The Arlington Community

course receive their instruction from the women. It would not perhaps occur to you," said Mr. Arlington after a slight pause, "that our chief difficulty lies in the necessity of imparting to our young men and women what otherwise they would never learn at Arlington, that is, some notion of the abyss of physical and moral degradation which exists in civilised and Christian societies, and which it is the chief aim of our community to conquer and avoid."

The speaker stopped, and asked for a glass of water. When this was provided, Lord Grantchester addressed him: "So far, Mr. Arlington, I find myself to a great extent in agreement with you. But we have still to hear what in fact is the system of marriage which prevails among you." "It was necessary to make plain to you in the first place," replied

The Arlington Community

Arlington, "the origin of the Community, the aims which we pursue, the sentiments which animate us, and the training which we bestow. Without these, the rest would be unintelligible. Given these data, the consequences follow naturally enough. To' proceed, then: having given to every boy and girl a healthy physical training, from childhood upwards, with periodical inspection and measurement, and having preserved a continuous record of their development, we are well able, when maturity is reached, to judge of their physical fitness for marriage. Again: while to promote the habit of self-restraint is distinctly among the objects of our training, yet the New Morality differs from that of Christian and civilised societies" (I despair of conveying to the reader the accent of contemptuous irony with which Arlington

The Arlington Community

pronounced these words) "in this respect, that being based on natural law, it does not require from the average individual—nay, even from the weakest—a degree of self-command of which, in sober truth, he is not capable, and then invoke a miracle to remedy the discrepancy of theory and fact. When a youth reaches manhood, if we judge him fit for marriage, we not merely encourage but even require him to marry. Provided we are pretty well assured that he is leading a chaste life, we allow him a year or two to look round him. But our view is that marriage should follow as a matter of course upon the attainment of manhood.

"Now we hold that the moral obligations of marriage by no means depend upon a legal contract, or a religious ceremony, but arise from the union of

The Arlington Community

the sexes, and the social consequences which it entails; in other words, that, as your Prayer-book truly says, marriage was ordained for the procreation of children. We see no reason to exact from the parties an engagement which in theory is indissoluble, while in fact it is too often violated by adultery, and finally torn up amid the scandal of the Divorce Court. With us, the marriage-contract, or as we prefer to call it, the contract of parentage, is in the first instance a binding engagement to exclusive mutual fidelity during a period of one year, or until the termination of the woman's first pregnancy. This contract carries with it the responsibility of the man to contribute to the support of his wife throughout this period, and to the support and rearing of the child or children born under the contract. It

The Arlington Community

may be, and generally is, renewed year by year, and in a majority of cases gives rise to a lifelong monogamous union like marriage among yourselves. But the parties are under no obligation to renew it. We do not press them to do so. They are free to part, and to form other connections, if they will. But in such cases the rules of the Community define their mutual obligations, and enforce their joint-responsibility for their offspring. Nor do we blame such a change of partners, but we require inflexibly that it shall be open and above-board, and accompanied by a fresh contract of parentage, with the discharge of all the obligations entailed by it. The Community reserves the right to expel its members for misconduct. But if you consider that our life is mainly lived in common, that our able-bodied

The Arlington Community

men and women are regularly mated at maturity, and that our marriage-contract may be renewed from year to year, or allowed to lapse, as the parties to it prefer, you will see that Arlington affords neither the opportunities nor the inducements which in your societies give rise to seduction and illegitimacy, to adultery or prostitution. In this way we have achieved the second of the objects which your Prayer-book sets forth, and namely, to avoid fornication."

The speaker paused, and Lord Grantchester said gravely, "I gather from what you have told us that marriage, or, as you say, parentage, is restricted to those whom you consider physically fitted for it. Now, I have been told that you practise emasculation. Is that true?" The reply was the more startling from the quiet seriousness with which it was

The Arlington Community

given. "With us," said Mr. Arlington, "that is a matter of course." Lord Grantchester rose to his feet, his whole bearing expressing the strongest disapproval. "Mr. Arlington," he said sternly, "I was not prepared for this. Still, I think it right to hear what you have to say in your defence." "It is but just, my lord, that you should do so," was the calm and dignified reply. "I am not surprised at your disapprobation. It is because you are accustomed to regard the rights of the individual as absolute, the claims of the race as non-existent. And also because you do not comprehend that with us, as it is esteemed a privilege and a trust to exercise the office of manhood with a view to the common good, so, with the same object, to renounce that office is a sacrifice which assures to him who makes it the gratitude and respect

The Arlington Community

of the whole community. We exact this sacrifice from none. If the youth prefers to leave the community, we make it easy for him to do so. Still, in that case, he must forsake his home, his friends, his prospects, and the principles in which he has been brought up. Let him, on the other hand, accept this lot, and he is regarded among us much as you would regard a soldier disabled in the service of your country. The Community becomes his family, and the children of us all his children. And as the parents among us are known as Fathers and Mothers, and the few unmarried women as Sisters, so the men who have made this sacrifice are called Brothers, and esteemed as such. Moreover, the ranks of the Brothers are joined, sooner or later, by every man among us. We breed in youth or early manhood. The period of

The Arlington Community

full conjugal intercourse is limited to a term of years. When a young man has enjoyed seven years of married life, and has perhaps four or five children, he is generally called upon by the rules of the Community to renounce the office of Procreation. In a much smaller class of picked men the term may be prolonged to fourteen years, and for the strongest and best among us to twenty-one—never beyond that limit. When the age of renunciation comes, the annual contract of parentage is replaced by a covenant of association, which may be regarded as covering the third of the purposes of Matrimony enumerated in your Prayer-book—namely, that of ‘mutual society, help, and comfort.’ The covenant is renewable, and is in most cases renewed, at intervals of five years. And similar relationships often exist between the Brothers

The Arlington Community

and Sisters, and are regulated in the same manner.

“I have now described to you the means by which we secure, first, the limitation of our offspring to such a number as we are able to rear with every possible advantage; secondly, that these shall be in every case the children of healthy parents. To us these two objects appear inestimable. Not merely do we not think the price too great to pay, but we esteem it a clear and positive duty to pay it. And as you have already indicated your disapprobation of our course, I am entitled to ask your attention to the grounds on which we believe it to be, absolutely, the right course.

“We hold, then, firstly, that no man has the right to beget offspring whom he has no reasonable prospect of being able to rear under fair conditions; secondly,

The Arlington Community

that no man has the right to beget offspring for whom he cannot reasonably expect sound health. To transmit to the unborn the taint of syphilis, or consumption, or insanity, is, in our judgment, an immoral act. The course which we take, or rather recommend, merely prevents the individual from doing that which he has no right to do. What wrong do we commit? We do but check the commission of a crime. By what right, then, do you blame us for taking such a course? We are but condemning what it is our duty to condemn, and preventing what it is our duty to prevent. Your Church and State neglect these duties; we perform them. Is it we that deserve censure, or is it you?"

"But the means," said Lord Grantchester, with an expression of disgust. "If that means had come down to you

The Arlington Community

from a distant past, as part of an accredited system of Law, or Morals, or Religion, like the Jewish rite of Circumcision, would it then have incurred your disapproval?" "I cannot tell," replied my cousin, after a brief pause; "but those are not the conditions under which I have to form my judgment." "It so happens," continued Arlington, "that the employment of this means for an adequate object has the clear sanction of Jesus Christ." Lord Grantchester started, recollected himself, and then said eagerly, "For a spiritual object, 'for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake'; and it is not clear to me that our Lord approved what He spoke of." "'All men cannot receive this saying,'" was the reply, "'save they to whom it is given. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.'" Lord Grantchester was silent, though not perhaps convinced.

The Arlington Community

“‘If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee,’” pursued his inflexible antagonist. “My lord, it is not the eye nor the hand nor the foot which is a stumbling-block to mankind. The meaning of Jesus is very plain. And as for the distinction which you draw between the physical and the spiritual, you cannot thus divide human nature or human life. Nor did Jesus do so when He tolerated, or suggested, a physical expedient for a spiritual end. And you would greatly mistake the ends which we have in view if you were to assume that these were non-spiritual. We aim at nothing less than the elevation of Humanity, and it is for this purpose that we would remove material impediments. It will perhaps surprise you to be told that several young men of weakly constitution have joined the Community with a view

The Arlington Community

of entering at once into the ranks of the Brothers, feeling themselves, as they have told me, unfit to undertake the responsibilities of marriage, and unable to sustain the burden and the temptations of a solitary life; preferring, therefore, to seek relief and compensation in the sympathies and hopes of our society. Such men would, I suppose, in former ages have joined the monastic orders. And it seems to me that their case is closely akin to that alluded to by Christ."

"That is indeed a striking and a touching circumstance," said Lord Grantchester. "But before stating the general objections to your system which present themselves to my mind," he continued, "I have another question to ask of you: Is it true you sanction polygamy?" "Under special conditions," was the reply. "Under *any* conditions," said my cousin im-

The Arlington Community

patiently, "I should regard it as a backward step in morals, and indeed in civilisation." "And rightly so," rejoined Arlington, "if it were a matter of personal indulgence. But I must constantly remind you that among us marriage in any form is regarded as a privilege and a trust to be exercised on behalf of the Community, and with a view to the advancement of the race. Therefore, when I say that polygamy is sanctioned among us under special conditions, it must be understood that the first and main condition lies in the moral sentiments and aims which supply the motive power of our common life. I quite agree, of course, that it could not be practised in London without involving degradation," Arlington continued with quiet irony. "How *can* polygamy advance mankind?" asked Lord Grant-

The Arlington Community

chester with unusual brusqueness. "Be patient, my lord," said Arlington. "I am nearly at the end of my story. Remember that our Community is in its very essence an experiment, a new departure. And let me remind you that, as I have already mentioned, our best recruits are drawn from the brotherhoods existing in various parts of the States. I wish," he added after a moment's pause, "I could by any means convey to you how we all of us together glory in the health, the vigour, and the beauty of our children, and in watching their growth and progress from year to year, believing as we do that in them lies in a measure the hope of the human race. You would then more readily understand the keen desire which exists within the Community to secure the adhesion of young men distinguished

The Arlington Community

by physical excellence and athletic prowess. For my part, I have had to stipulate three things with regard to such adherents—that they should be caught young, that they should be of good conduct, and that they should throw in their lot with the Community, and accept its principles. We expect them to join in our labours, and to superintend the physical training of the young. Naturally they are permitted to enjoy the extreme period of conjugal intercourse. But in their case the contract of parentage, which requires exclusive fidelity from the woman, imposes no such restriction on the man; and in five instances (that is as yet the whole number) these men have become the fathers of offspring by several mothers.” “Surely,” exclaimed Lord Grantchester, “that is

The Arlington Community

unfair and degrading to the woman.”

“Not so, my lord; not so,” replied Arlington warmly. “Remember that the woman is bred from her girlhood to regard it as her highest honour and duty to bear children to the Community, to become, as we sometimes say, ‘a mother in Israel,’ and as such to be revered among us. Now the unions of which we speak are imposed on no one; but when we say to our daughters, The Community asks this of you for the benefit of the race, we are sure of meeting with a response.”

“Mr. Arlington,” exclaimed my cousin, “the more I listen to you, the more impossible do I feel it for me to pronounce any judgment, to award either praise or blame to a scheme of human life so strange, and to me at least almost inconceivable, so wholly foreign to my

The Arlington Community

accustomed modes of thought, to every standard by which I am accustomed to be guided. You are making, as you say, a wholly new departure. You appear to ignore the past experience of mankind and the moral ideals which have hitherto guided the progress of civilisation."

"My lord," replied Arlington earnestly, "it is because we judge a new departure an absolute necessity. When you speak to me of accepted standards, I bid you look at existing society. When I quit the healthful, hopeful life of Arlington, to visit the great cities either of Europe or America, your Christian civilisation appears to me worse than bestial."

Lord Grantchester looked very grave; presently he replied gently, "Your community may be compared to a religious society in the first flush of its enthusiasm. It is immeasurably easier for you to avoid,

The Arlington Community

than it is for us to extirpate, the deep-rooted evils which, I admit it, flourish and abound in London or Paris or New York." "You must rebuild the infected house," was the answer. "And where are we to live meanwhile?" asked Lord Grantchester, smiling sadly. "That is for you to say, not for me. We, to the best of our abilities and according to our lights, are grappling with the evil. Now, I do not ask you to accept our principles and adopt our methods. I do not demur to your judgment. You will form it, no doubt, in accordance with your convictions, and we shall continue to act on ours. But I do say to you, Lord Grantchester, as I say to every Christian man in a responsible position, that if you will not do as we do, then you must do better. In one way or another you must take up the task and accom-

The Arlington Community

plish it, or perish. The evils of which we speak do not exist in opinion. It is not thinking that makes them so. They are as real as war or plague or famine; and they are even more deadly to the race, for they operate constantly, and they poison the fountain of life at its source. Poverty and misery and disease and vice are like eating and spreading sores on the body of Humanity. You must heal, or eradicate, or die." "I fear Humanity is a refractory patient," said my cousin with the same melancholy smile. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick," was the answer; "*a Christian* should call not the righteous but sinners to repentance. You believe in God, and you acquiesce in the Haymarket!"

My cousin was silent. Presently he said: "I grant what you say, but your

The Arlington Community

method I cannot accept. To me, marriage is a sacred thing. It is the intimate personal affection, the spiritual tie, the indissoluble union, which purifies the passions of the sexes, and raises us above the level of the beasts." "Is that in the marriage-market?" replied Arlington with grave sternness. I was sorry for my cousin, and impatient with his merciless opponent. The two men stood side by side on the hearthrug, Lord Grantchester leaning against the mantelpiece, a slight figure, the head bowed in thought, with a look of pain on his worn and sensitive countenance. The other, old yet vigorous, rose erect above him, his whole burly frame instinct with passionate energy. It seemed an unequal contest. But my cousin is not the man to shirk an issue. "No," was his deliberate reply, "but it exists in our laws

The Arlington Community

and our religion. That is the standard by which we judge, the ideal which is realised in many a Christian home in every rank of life." "And so, my lord," said Arlington, his eyes sparkling and his face relaxed almost into tenderness, "so does it exist *in fact* in many, nay, I believe in most cases, among ourselves. The differences are twofold: firstly, that our laws do not exact such a profession; secondly, that with us there is always something beyond, an end to which the love of man and woman ministers, a prospect of wider scope than the individual life. The key to our faith and practice may be given in a few words: Marriage for the sake of Parentage; Parentage a trust for the race."

It was time to part. Before leaving, Mr. Arlington drew from his breast-pocket, and opened, a small case con-

The Arlington Community

taining two medals, in silver and in bronze. "Since I have been in Europe," he said, "I have procured the execution of these tokens, one for the Fathers and Mothers, one for the Brothers and Sisters of our Community." He then handed the silver medal to my cousin, saying, "This is the Token of Marriage." It bore upon one face the Hermes of Praxiteles, nursing the infant Dionysus, with the motto, "*fortes creantur fortibus et bonis*;" on the other, the Venus de Milo, with the arms restored as if outstretched to receive the child, and round the image the inscription, "*et quasi cursores vitai lampada tradunt*." When we had both examined and returned it, Arlington passed us the bronze medal. "This," he said gravely, "is the Token of Renunciation." It was of larger size than the first, and had no inscription.

The Arlington Community

It bore upon one side, exquisitely modelled, the divine Virgin and Child from the Sistine Madonna of Raphael; on the other, the image of Christ Crucified. Lord Grantchester returned it in silence, and for a while none of us spoke or moved. At last, to relieve the strain, I asked Mr. Arlington whether he had come to Europe to commission these medals. "No" (such were his last words before he parted from us), "I came to found the brotherhood in London."

ταῦτα τὰ ἔπη λεγεί—

τοὺς ἀνθρώπους

οὐκ ἐπίστασθαι γεννᾶν

ἐξ ἀλλήλων,

κᾶτα γίγνεσθαι τὸ γένος

τῶν ἀνθρώπων

κάκιον ἀεὶ μιγνύμενον

τὸ χεῖρον τῷ βελτίονι.

οἱ δὲ πολλοὶ ἐκ τούτων τῶν ἐπῶν οἴονται τὸν ποιητὴν πολυπραγμοσύνην τῶν ἀνθρώπων κατηγορεῖν, καὶ ἀντὶ χρημάτων ἀγένειαν καὶ κακίαν ἀντικαταλλάττεσθαι εἰδότας· ἐμοὶ δὲ δοκεῖ ἄγνοίαν κατηγορεῖν περὶ τὸν αὐτῶν βίον.

“These verses declare that men are ignorant in the art of man-breeding, and therefore the human breed is ever declining by mixture, the worse with the better. It is commonly thought, indeed, from these verses, that the poet charges mankind with going out of their proper sphere, and with consciously accepting wealth as a compensation for vice and degeneracy. But in my opinion what he alleges against them is ignorance of the conditions in which they live.”—Stobæus, cited in the *Athenæum*, January 3rd, 1903.

The Divine Brethren.

The Divine Brethren :

Being a Discourse in Paradise, which there befell between *Hermes* and the Lord JESUS ; to whom entered presently the lady *Venus*, which is called *Aphrodite Urania*, and afterward our Lady *Mary*, also the blessed Apostles *Paul* and *John* ; and these all fell in speech concerning the things of the flesh, and concerning the things of the spirit : telling also how *Hermes* overcame *Belial*, and what charge the Lord gave unto *Hermes*, that he should bear it unto the sons of men.

Now it was the winter season, and I lodged without the city of Naples. And it came to pass, when the sun shone upon the waters, that I sat in the garden of mine inn and breathed the sweet air. And as I looked down upon the city, wherein are many rich but many more that are poor,

The Divine Brethren

many that are vain, and alas! many that are base and vile, I mused thereon, and as I mused, I fell asleep.

And in my sleep I dreamed, and lo! I was in Paradise, the garden of God, upon the mount of God. Above the heaven was exceeding clear, and the light of the sun was sevenfold. Yet it burned not hand or face, neither did mine eyes blink at his gaze. And all about on every side, and over my head, the green leaves fluttered in the delicate air, and the birds sang amid the branches. The dragon-fly also and the butterfly flew to and fro in the sunshine, and as they flew they shone like jewels. And as I moved across the soft turf, which was even yet dewy, and entered into a broad glade, I perceived the company of the angels. Some were all in bright armour, and these kept the ways with sword and shield that no evil thing

The Divine Brethren

might enter there. Some were clad in long robes, and from their shoulders mighty wings drooped almost to the ground, and the plumage on their wings was like the mother of pearl. These paced gently along, leading with them bands of little children. And I discerned that these little ones were the souls of the blessed, for of them it is written that except a man so enter the Kingdom of Heaven he shall in no wise enter therein. And in my dream I passed along that glade until there were no more any in my sight, and I was alone. And so I came to a great space where at first I saw no man, but two trees only, and behold they were very great. The one was like unto a cedar, but it appeared in bigness as a mountain, and his broad branches like the fields upon a mountain side. The sun shone upon them, but they cast a deep

The Divine Brethren

shadow on the soil of Paradise, and underneath them grew no green thing. They were thickly set with fruit, as it were pine-cones. It lay upon the bare ground, and one I took within my hands, but could not break it, it was so hard. Then I turned to view the other tree. It was higher than the highest tower, in shape like unto a palm, and his stem like a column of the malachite stone. And upon the top of the tree, and amid the branches thereof, a mighty flower, as it were a great lily, and it shone with brightness as the moon at her full.

Then was I ware of one that walked between the two trees. He was tall even as were the angels, but his form was the form of man, neither were there any wings upon his shoulders. His vesture reached to his feet, and it was white as new-fallen snow. His hair and his beard were

The Divine Brethren

golden as the glory of the sun. His countenance was severe, yet was it beautiful, as of one that hath grievously endured and gloriously triumphed. And I knew him for the Son of Man. Then my heart leapt within me, and I would fain have gone unto him, that I might have fallen at his feet, but my limbs trembled and would not bear me.

And there came towards him across the greensward, in the brightest of all that space, another, as it were the goodliest of the sons of men. And he seemed about five and twenty years of age. He was wholly naked, even as a babe that is newly born of his mother, and he was perfect in every part; even from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot there was no blemish in him; having the strength of a man, and the beauty of a young man. His countenance was open

The Divine Brethren

and favourable, as that of a generous youth, and methought I read therein these three things, even Joy, and Love, and Sorrow. He bare himself nobly, and full of grace he came to Jesus, and stooped, and bowed himself, and took the Lord's hand, and kissed it. And methought, when Jesus beheld him, he loved him, and spake unto him graciously, and said unto him, God be with thee, my brother Hermes. And Hermes answered him, even as a youth that speaketh unto his elder, saying, My brother Jesus.

And lo! from beside the tree of Life there came, following Hermes, one having the form of woman; and she was the fairest and the most winsome that ever I beheld, so that I blessed God for that he had created so fair a thing. She had no covering but her hair only, and it was infinite in abundance; and as the soft

The Divine Brethren

airs of Paradise wafted it hither and thither, it floated all about her like a bright cloud, and here and there her limbs and her delicate body shone among it, as an ivory image that is veiled in cloth of gold; yet were they fairer than ivory, for they were flushed with the life-blood, even as it were the tender buds upon a rose. Yea, and the wind that breathed about her bore to me the perfume of roses; for her brow was crowned therewith. And with her was a flight of silver doves, which made a circle all around her as she moved, even as the rainbow that is seen around the moon. And as she tripped across that space (for lightly she went and gladly) all the earth brake forth into flowers beneath her feet, and where there was before but the green blade, there bloomed the violet and the primrose and the

The Divine Brethren

flower of the wood which is called anemone.

So she came toward Hermes, and she had eyes only for her groom; and she saw not the Lord. And indeed the limbs of Hermes were mightier than the stature of Jesus, so that the one was hidden by the other, and she saw him not. And fain would she take Hermes unawares, so with a murmur she hushed her doves and waved them backwards with her hand, and stole silently to him, going upon tip-toe and smiling as she went, and laid her hand upon his shoulder, and looked up to him and laughed gleefully. Then Hermes turned towards her and drew back, so that she beheld the Lord. And when she saw him she kneeled, and her hair fell about her like a robe; and she would have kissed his feet. But Jesus raised her up, and kissed her on both

The Divine Brethren

cheeks, and said unto her, Blessed be thou of our Father, my child Urania: which being interpreted is Heavenly. Then she spake unto him humbly, and said unto him, Lord, I am not worthy to be called Urania, for I was born upon the Earth, where the sea-foam kisseth the dry land, and lo! when I set foot thereon it was no longer barren. And my delight is with the children of men. Then said Jesus unto her, Thou shalt be called Urania, seeing thou bringest Heaven into the hearts of men and leadest them heavenward; but upon Earth they shall call thee Wedded Love.

And even as they spake there came from hard by the tree of Knowledge a woman clothed in a vesture of silver and thereon a mantle of blue. And in her face and stature she resembled the blessed Lord, even as an elder sister

The Divine Brethren

might resemble her brother. Her countenance was pure and solemn, as of one that through much suffering hath attained peace. She came to Jesus, and would have worshipped him, but he prevented her, and himself did her reverence, and took her by the hand, and led her, and set her beneath the tree of Life. Then I knew that it was our Lady.

And Hermes and Urania kneeled at her feet. And I marvelled to see them naked before her as innocent children. And I remembered that I was in Paradise wherein is neither sin nor shame. And she blessed them, and kissed Urania, and said unto her, I would fain speak with thee, my child. So they rose, and went together, and came nigh whereas I hid myself (for I was afraid) and as they passed by me, our Lady spake unto

The Divine Brethren

Urania, and said unto her, What doest thou, Urania, for the daughters of men? And Urania answered saying, Even to her that is poorest among them I bring the light of life. Then said Mary to Urania, But I go among them that I may comfort them in their pains, and keep them from temptation. And they passed on. And the Lord walked with Hermes, and as they went he said unto him, Whence comest thou my brother? And Hermes answered, I was among the young men beside the river; and some swam the stream, and others rowed thereon with oars; and I was among them, and rejoiced with them, though they knew it not. Then said Jesus unto him, I also walked among them; and behold they were all of them called by my name, yet they knew me not, neither regarded me.

The Divine Brethren

Now while the Lord thus spake with Hermes, there came unto them two other, of the sons of men. The elder of them twain was little of stature, but he seemed of a mighty courage. All his visage was deeply worn, and he appeared unto me even as one that beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. And his robe was the colour of blood. The younger was of a tender countenance, almost as it had been the face of a woman; and his eyes were as if he beheld a vision. And he was clad in a green robe. So these twain came to Jesus and worshipped him. And he embraced them, and said unto the elder, Blessed art thou, my servant Paul. But unto the younger he said, My beloved disciple. Then I knew that it was the Apostle John.

The Divine Brethren

Now when they twain were ware of Hermes standing there beside Jesus, then John looked upon him with amazement, but Paul with sternness. And Hermes behaved himself courteously and saluted them; but they returned no answer. Then he smiled, and turned from them, and looked earnestly upon Jesus. Yet the Lord rebuked not his disciples for that discourtesy, but he was as though he saw not that which passed. And he said unto Hermes, My brother, touching these young men of whom we spake but now, thou art among them, and knowest all their ways, and understandest their thoughts, for thou art even as they, and art for ever young. Tell me, therefore, why to me they give no heed, neither regard me; yet I died for them. Then said Hermes unto him, Lord, what have they to do with death? Our Father

The Divine Brethren

hath given unto them the gift of life, and in the fulness thereof do they rejoice. These are but newly come to the knowledge of their strength; the world is before them, and all things are theirs that are therein. Wherefore then should these bethink them of sorrow or of death, and not rather of the life that is in them and on every side, of the sport of a youth, and the honourable ambition of a man? All things in their season; but to me the Father hath given the season of youth. Then saith John unto him, If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. Then Hermes answered him with indignation, saying, God blessed the children of men, and said unto them,

The Divine Brethren

Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and this law hath he written within their hearts, that they should fulfil it. Why then dost thou John make void the command of God, and the blessing that he blessed them withal? Art thou then wiser than He? And John answered him not, but said unto Jesus, Lord, open thou his eyes. But the Lord spake not. Then said Paul, Hermes, thou sojournest in Paradise, and walkest upon the Earth, but into Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens hast thou not ascended, that thou shouldest know the things which are above, neither hast thou descended into Hell. And Hermes answered him modestly, and said, When I was yet but a babe our Father brought me hither, and before that I knew not anything. And he set me on the green earth, and bade me walk

The Divine Brethren

thereon, and taught me to go. He drew me with cords of a man, even with bands of love. And he fed me with food that I knew not, and gave me to drink from the fountain of the Water of Life. But of the fruit of the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil suffered he me not to taste; and I have ever obeyed him. And I grew up before him, increasing in wisdom and stature, and his favour was ever with me. And when I came to my full strength, then he set me for an example to the sons of men, that I should be their teacher to exercise and discipline them in all manliness and virtue. Also he gave to me this office, that at their deaths I should bear hither their souls as new-born babes, to deliver them into his hands; but himself dealeth with them, and judgeth of them, yea, and careth for them; neither know I that which he

The Divine Brethren

hath determined for them. That which he hath given unto me I have received, and that which he hath commanded me I perform. And Lord, I trow that my brothers of whom thou spakest be not wiser than I, nor is more required of them.

And when Hermes had ended this saying, then said John unto him, Hermes, thou deemest that thou hast need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art poor and blind and naked: wherefore I counsel thee—— But at that Hermes stayed no longer, nor listened unto him, neither replied to him with words, nor yet with scorn, but joyously and mightily he laughed aloud, so that the glades of Eden rang with the voice of his mirth, and the birds rose from the branches, and circled in the air, before they returned unto their place. But two of them,

The Divine Brethren

which were pigeons of the wood, when they saw Hermes, feared not but came about him, and he whistled unto them, and one perched upon his shoulder and one upon his head; and tenderly with his strong hand he caressed them. And when the Lord heard Hermes laugh, and saw the gentleness which he used with the doves, behold he smiled upon him, even as a grave father that seeth his child at play, even so the Lord smiled upon Hermes.

But Paul said, Hermes, thou art ever a babe, and hast not come to the full age and stature of manhood. And when Hermes heard that he turned upon him, and as he did so the doves rose from off him, and he flung up his goodly arms, and clasped his hands behind his head, and proudly he smiled upon Paul, even as a young man glorieth in his

The Divine Brethren

strength, and rejoiceth in the pride of life. And when I considered him I marvelled. For his arms were like the boughs of a strong tree, and his well-knit body like the firm trunk thereof, which beareth up the load of his timber, and is not moved from his place by all the winds of heaven. And his arched breast was like the frame of a gallant ship, which heaveth quietly upon the water; and his belly like the curving sails thereof, which the breeze filleth and the sun shineth on them. Yea, even his privy members were seemly to behold, like ripe fruit upon a fair tree, as of a young man which is capable of love, yet continent. And his thighs were like pillars of marble; his hands also and his feet like the perfect instruments of the cunning worker; and even in all his person he was comely as a

The Divine Brethren

noble steed. So I admired the workmanship of God. But when I bethought me of the sicknesses and infirmities of the children of men, my heart was woe, and I said within me, O that all men were such as he!

But when Jesus beheld Hermes that he thus exulted, he looked steadfastly upon him, as a father watcheth his child at sport, lest by inadvertence he should do aught that is amiss. And he laid his hand upon him; and I saw that it was scarred. Then Hermes turned unto Jesus, and frankly and lovingly he gazed upon the Lord. But when he read his countenance it came to pass that he changed his posture, and bowed his head, and spake humbly even unto Paul, saying, By the grace of God I am what I am; but ye would have me to despise the excellent gift of God. Then said

The Divine Brethren

Paul unto him, Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. And Hermes said unto him, Wherein have I offended? And Paul answered him, saying, All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Then Hermes spake unto him again and said, Paul, thou sayest that I am but a babe, yet even a babe may teach thee that thou knowest not. For a child knoweth that his father loveth him and careth for him, yea, and beareth with him; and if he do rebuke him, it is but for his good, and if he chastise him, it is but for an occasion; and when he is sorry for his fault, then he forgiveth him and comforteth him, for he ever loveth him. He doth not lie in wait for him to catch him at a fault, or make him an offender for a word. Neither doth

The Divine Brethren

he treasure up against him that which he hath done amiss, nor reckon up the sum of his offences, as if his child were debtor to him. And even as a father pitieth his children, so is God merciful unto the sons of men. He asketh not strength from the weak, or knowledge from the ignorant; neither doth he require perfection from the imperfect, or that one should bring a clean thing out of an unclean. He taxeth them not with their folly, but is patient with them, and leadeth them gently in his paths, even as a shepherd leadeth his flock. He guideth them in strange places, and encourageth them that are weary, and helpeth them that stumble, and raiseth them that fall. He, even he, is touched with the feeling of their infirmities, and in all their affliction he is afflicted, nor even when they have

The Divine Brethren

rebelled against him doth he become their enemy. Yea, when his son that hath sinned against him, and hath wasted with the harlots the precious gifts of God, repenteth him, and again seeketh his father, and cometh unto him, and saith unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: he will in nowise cast him out, neither doth he require an atonement at his hand, but though he be poor and empty he receiveth him, yea, he loveth him freely, for his anger is turned away from him.

Then said Paul, Yea, even so hath God, for Christ's sake, forgiven us. Then Hermes turned him unto Jesus, and said unto him, Sayest thou so, Lord? And Jesus answered not that which he asked, but said unto him, Speak on. Then

The Divine Brethren

Hermes waxed very bold, and said unto Paul, Surely thou art a childless man, and knowest not the love of a father for his offspring. But thou hast sat at the feet of Gamaliel, which learned his doctrine from the scribes, and behold ye deem of the Most High as if he too were a scribe like unto yourselves, even one that writeth down the words of the law, and addeth precept unto precept, and defineth obligations, and assigneth penalties, and exacteth satisfaction, gathering where he hath not strawed, and reaping where he hath not sown. Yea, if a man serve God with all his might, even with all the power that he hath given unto him, he hath no thanks, neither is it accounted to him for righteousness; he hath done that which it is his duty to do. But if he offend in the least point, then is he guilty of all. And ye suffer not his

The Divine Brethren

Father to forgive him, but he must needs punish without ceasing, and that for ever and ever. Yea, because the sons of men be weak and erring, and offend oft, ye would have him despise the work of his own hands, and condemn them, although he knoweth their infirmities. So that first ye esteem of God as of a petty lawyer, and then, as of an hard creditor, and last of all, as of a merciless tormentor. And this ye call Justice, and Righteousness; and your mercy is even like unto your justice. Thus have ye laid upon mankind a burden which they are not able to bear. And he that is strong among them giveth no heed unto your teaching, but him that is tender-hearted have ye brought nigh unto despair. Then spake Paul, saying, Yea, I myself was almost ready to despair, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin; but thanks be

The Divine Brethren

unto God which giveth us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. And thus saying he appealed unto Jesus; but he answered him never a word. Then spake Hermes yet again, and said unto him, Paul, thy thoughts are as the thoughts of a sick man, which tosseth himself upon his bed, and he cannot rest, and the night is long; and because he is weak in body, and suffereth pain, and is in danger of his life, all things are dark unto him, and terrors oppress him. But when God sendeth his angel, and restoreth him to health, then he goeth forth by day, and is as one that hath awakened from an evil dream. So is it with thee. Bless therefore our Father, and him whom he hath sent, but seek not to affray us with the dreams of thy sickness. For even as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are the ways of

The Divine Brethren

God higher than the ways of man, and his thoughts than their thoughts. Our Father spake not unto the children of men concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices, but this thing he commanded them, saying, Hearken unto my voice, and I will be your God and ye shall be my people. Neither hath he spoken unto Israel alone; neither is the law of Israel as the Law of God. For his law is an universal law, and reacheth from the one end of heaven to the other. It is not written upon tables of stone, neither speaketh he only by the lips of the prophets. But his law is written within the hearts of men, and ever he speaketh to such as can discern his voice.

Then I marvelled at his eloquence and wisdom.

And Paul answered and said unto him, O the depth of the riches both of the

The Divine Brethren

wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past tracing out! Of a truth God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him. For when Gentiles which have no law do by nature the things of the law, these, having no law, are a law unto themselves. But they have all turned aside, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one. Then answered Hermes, Thinkest thou thus ill of mankind? And Paul said unto him, Knowest thou not the harlot Pandemos, which also is called Akrasia, whose lovers are without number, and her daughters as the sand of the sea? Yea, said Hermes, I know her and I hate her, for she is mine enemy, and the enemy of my beloved, even my spouse

The Divine Brethren

Urania, whom she mocketh and personateth and dishonoureth; also she seduceth my brethren and debaseth them, that they should not love as it becometh a man, but rather lust as do the beasts. Therefore I hate her, and with all my power contend against her; and he that is schooled by me will have nought to do with her, but will rather behave himself manly and avoid her, until the time come when he shall wed and beget offspring.

Then said Paul, Thou hast well spoken. Yet is there a thing more foul than she, even the sin of Sodom, that men should dishonour their own bodies among themselves; and this among the Greeks is as the plague of leprosy. Then said Hermes, I abhor the evil thing whereof thou speakest, for as the other mocketh and polluteth the due love of Man and Woman, so doth this pervert and defile that

The Divine Brethren

affection which a man should bear unto his brethren. For we that are compact of body and soul, must needs love with our bodies and with our souls; but ever the soul should have the pre-eminence and the mastery. And being physical, if we love another we must needs cherish his person, even as a man cherisheth his brother, the son of his mother, or as a father cherisheth his son. And love, which is a strong emotion, may for a season trouble the mind of the strongest, even as a sudden storm which stirreth up the deep. Neither is it to be desired that a man should be insensible, but rather that he should be master of his affections, even as a bold and skilful rider governeth the horse whereon he rideth, and rejoiceth in his spirit and courage, and feareth no danger, seeing he reineth him in at will, and turneth him hither

The Divine Brethren

and thither. Moreover, he that truly loveth his fellow will reverence him that he loveth, so that he would even sooner lose hand or foot than suffer aught that may tend to his dishonour. Neither will he exact his affection, but rather will he spend himself in his service, or even withdraw himself from him, if it be for his good. Thus shall he love worthily, as it becometh a man to love his fellow.

Now while Hermes thus spake it came to pass that the heaven grew dim, and lo! a parching wind which moved the branches of the tree of Knowledge, and from beneath them came one terrible to behold. And when I saw him I feared greatly, and much I marvelled that one so evil-favoured should come thither. Tall was he and naked, and his skin black as coal, very powerful was he and sinewy, and his face cruel and lustful.

The Divine Brethren

Insolently he came to Jesus, and without reverence, yea, with a sneer he spake unto the Lord and said unto him, Friend, are thy wounds yet healed, which the sons of men have given unto thee, for the love thou barest unto them? And Jesus answered him not. Now when Hermes saw him coming, he knit his brows and set his teeth and clenched his hands; but when he heard the words which he spake unto the Lord, then his eyes kindled and he cried aloud, Look to thyself, Belial; and fiercely he flung himself upon him. So they closed together, and strove there mightily. And the Lord kneeled and prayed for Hermes. And ever the twain contended both with strength and skill, wrestling one with the other and straining and tugging and swaying hither and thither, till it befell that Hermes stumbled, and the other,

The Divine Brethren

having him at a vantage, pressed hard upon him, and brought him to his knees. And the Lord prayed yet without ceasing. And though I deemed not that my prayers could add force to his, yet for the satisfaction of mine own heart, earnestly I besought God to succour that noble champion which so gallantly contended with the fiend. And Belial pressed upon him with might and main, to cast him utterly to the ground and destroy him. And Hermes groaned as he struggled with him. Then I saw as it were a flash of light, and behold Urania which came unto her lord, flying through the air more swiftly than a bird, yet without wings, and as I think she was merely borne of her own motion and the force of her exceeding love. Her hair streamed in the wind, nor was there aught to defend her tender body. The

The Divine Brethren

tears were on her cheeks, but her eyes were fixed only upon Hermes and his adversary. She stayed not, neither did she fear, but even as a hen that would defend her brood, she came whereas they fought, and set her hands upon the hands of Belial. And his hands were like hands of iron, but hers were as the hands of a babe. And I feared lest he should have thrown Hermes and torn her in pieces; so cruel he seemed and so mighty. But behold, when she touched him, he shrank back, and stumbled in his turn. Then Hermes instantly rose up upon his feet and grappled with him afresh, as one betwixt despair and hope. And so they strove there together, the Lord praying earnestly meanwhile, and Urania encouraging her bridegroom. And at the last Hermes threw Belial, and cast him to the ground, and trampled

The Divine Brethren

on him. Then was I ware of Hermes standing there alone, and I beheld the adversary no more.

But Hermes gasped for breath, and all his body was bruised and bleeding, and lo! the sweat upon his brow was even as the sweat of Gethsemane. And scarce had he recovered breath but he kneeled upon the ground, and drew unto his side his wife, even Urania, and kissed her, and lifted up his voice and gave thanks unto the Father, which through her love had given him the victory. Now while he yet strove with the fiend, our blessed Lady came again to that place. And when he had given thanks to God, while he yet kneeled there, and Urania beside him, then our Lady came to him, and with great love and compassion she kissed Hermes, even as a mother kisseth her son. And Jesus

The Divine Brethren

plucked from the tree of Knowledge a branch, and bent it into a wreath, as it were a crown, and set it upon Hermes' head. And the branch was like the branch of a cedar, and for leaves it had spikes, and meseemed that it resembled a crown of thorns. And Jesus said, *To him that overcometh.* And Hermes arose. And Paul said unto him, As a good soldier of Christ hast thou striven and hast prevailed. And John came to him eagerly, and with great joy and wonder he said unto him, And thou, Hermes, hast thou overcome the wicked one? And Hermes spake no word unto John, but grasped him by the hand. And I perceived that there was no more strife between them. Then said Hermes, I go to bathe me in the Water of Life. So he departed for a space, Urania also accompanying him.

The Divine Brethren

And when they were departed, Paul said unto Jesus, Lord, it was even because thou prayedst for him that he overcame the adversary. And Jesus said unto him, Give glory to God, even our Father, inasmuch as this also is a son of God. And he hath given unto him force and courage to defy the adversary and strive with him, and that love which, even as ye yourselves have seen, enabled him that he should overcome. Pray ye therefore for all such, even as I have prayed, but God that is the giver of all goodness, he it is which giveth the victory.

Then said John unto him, Lord, wilt thou not at this time open his eyes that he may discern the things of the spirit? And Jesus answered and said, Thinkest thou, John, that he doth not as yet discern them? Or that the Spirit of

The Divine Brethren

God must needs come to all his children only in such wise as it hath come to thee? Nay, but by other lips and with strange tongues will he speak unto this people. In my Father's house are many mansions, and to Hermes he hath assigned his mansion upon this goodly earth and his station among the sons of men, that he should teach them the message which is committed unto him. Therefore forbid him not; for he that is with me is not against me. Yea, them that are babes shall he lead unto my Father's house, and there will I meet with them. And ye that are my disciples teach as ye have learned, and according as ye have apprehended even so ye speak, even as a child that frameth his thoughts in the language of his elders. But think not yourselves to have comprehended the depths of God. Be it enough for you

The Divine Brethren

that ye have a little discerned them, lest haply ye be like unto a child that would fain instruct a babe that is younger than he; and lo! he is but a babe himself. Go ye therefore to them to whom ye are sent, and bear to them the tidings which ye have received; but Hermes and the young men that are with him shall ye leave to the good hand of God.

Now when the Lord had thus spoken, behold Hermes returning from the fountain, and Urania with him; they came hand in hand. And his skin was every whit whole. Pure and strong and noble he appeared unto me, yea and the light of thanksgiving was in his eyes, yet his countenance was very grave. And he seemed as though in a brief space he had passed from youth to manhood. And behold a wonder. For that crown which Jesus had set upon

The Divine Brethren

his brow as it were a crown of thorns, being wet with the Water of Life, was suddenly therewith transformed, and as the branch of the thorn in springtime putteth forth flowers amid the tender leaves thereof, even so this crown became a crown of flowers upon Hermes' head. And Urania looked wonderingly upon him, as one that cannot sufficiently express her love, yet were there tears in her eyes for the danger which she had seen. So they came to Jesus. And Hermes said unto him, I am Manhood, and with me is Wedded Love; and our ministrations are with the children of men. Bless us therefore ere we go hence that we may serve them. For thus my Father spake unto us beside the fountain, that we should impart unto our brethren and to our sisters the precious gifts which we have received

The Divine Brethren

of him. Suffer us therefore that we go hence with thy blessing.

And the Lord blessed them, and called them by new names. And Hermes he called Adam, which in the Hebrew tongue signifieth Man; and Urania he called Eve, as she were the mother of all living; and I marvelled greatly. Moreover, the Lord spake unto Hermes saying, I charge thee, when thou comest unto thy brethren, that thou speak not unto them concerning me, neither make mention of my name; for I perceive that it is unto them as a tale of ancient time, and they regard it not; but do thou my works. And they, when they have need of me, will surely seek me. Prepare them therefore that they may become as fitting citizens of my kingdom, even that they may be in purity and simplicity and gentleness as little children, but in strength and understanding as men.

The Divine Brethren

Yea, let them rejoice in their sports, and do thou rejoice with them in all that tendeth to manly and virtuous living. And do thou use them also to discipline, that they may learn to labour and endure hardness and exercise self-restraint, and that they may bear and forbear and share with one another. And when they be come to full age, exhort them to put away childish things, that they live not only for their sport and for their pleasure, and for luxury and for vanity, nor for getting money and for spending it, even as them that know no better; but let it be their ambition and their task that while they themselves live plainly as it becometh a man to live, they shall with all the powers that God hath given them so serve that state or commonwealth in which he hath placed them, that it may at the last become even as the Kingdom

The Divine Brethren

of Heaven. And should they despair, because the evil is great, bid them not to despair, for the time is come. Say to them, The fathers laboured, and ye have entered into their labours, and that which they might not see shall ye behold. Only be just and prudent, temperate and of good courage, so shall ye obtain the victory. Whatsoever ye have received, freely give; it is more blessed to give than to receive. Therefore let none among you be satisfied to possess that which he doth not according to his ability impart; neither let any be content that even the least of his brethren shall, by reason of poverty or ignorance or the fault of his parents, be worse than he. For a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he hath, but in knowing and doing good. And his reward shall be the love of his

The Divine Brethren

brethren. Be strong therefore, and quit yourselves like men. Thus shalt thou speak unto them, and this is the ensample thou shalt set before them.

And when Jesus had finished these sayings, Urania spake reverently to him, and said, Lord, hast thou no word for me? Then Jesus answered her, and with great tenderness spake unto her, saying, Hitherto thou hast been as a child; be thou now a woman, and an help meet for man, that he may reverence thee; and likewise do thou reverence him. Our Lady also spake unto Hermes, saying, Hermes, I know thee that thou art both strong and gentle; I charge thee, therefore, that thou forget not ever to succour the sick and to support the aged. Then Hermes and Urania bowed themselves, and took leave of the Lord and of them that were with him. So they departed,

The Divine Brethren

and passed along the glades of Eden until they came unto the gate thereof; and I watched them as they went. But when the gate was opened, and they passed through, I saw them no more; and I awoke, and behold, it was a dream.



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